SUNDAY
March 15, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
26 Pages ₹ 8.00

THE HINDU ON SUNDAY

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

www.thehindu.com
Vol. 57 • No. 11
RNI No. KARENG/1970/49960

To subscribe,
give a missed call at
9828331787
or scan QR code

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

Every day begins with a choice.
The choice to stay where you are.
Or to step into what"s next.
To follow what"s known.
Or to create what truly matters.
Some choices shape moments.
Others shape the life we build.
Because what we choose today
becomes the life we live tomorrow.
So, would you choose to just live
or live brilliantly?

PRESENTING
MANA
LIVE BRILLIANTLY

26 YEARS
OF EXCELLENCE

38+ MN SQ. FT.
OF DEVELOPMENTS

30+ PROJECTS
COMPLETED

15,000+
HAPPY FAMILIES

Alchemist/Clay

Begin your MANA home journey today.
CALL 080 3733 1414
or visit www.manaprojects.com

CREDAI
BENGALURU

J BG-BGE

SUNDAY
March 15, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
26 Pages ₹ 8.00

THE HINDU ON SUNDAY

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

www.thehindu.com
Vol. 57 • No. 11
RNI No. KARENG/1970/49960

To subscribe, give a missed call at 9828331787 or scan QR code

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

TIGER DEATHS

A worrying count in Maharashtra

The State recorded 41 of the 166 tiger deaths reported in the country in 2025

NEWS» PAGE 9

Last atomic clock on navigation satellite fails

NEWS » PAGE 9

Mojtaba Khamenei: The cleric with a gun

PROFILES » PAGE 13

Antonelli becomes the youngest to clinch pole

SPORT » PAGE 16

Wangchuk released as govt. revokes his detention under NSA

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

MHA invokes rarely-used Section 14 to revoke detention order

Ladakhi activist Sonam Wangchuk was released from Jodhpur Central Jail on Saturday, after the Union Home Ministry revoked with "immediate effect" his 170-day detention under the National Security Act (NSA).

Invoking its powers under Section 14 of the stringent Act, the Ministry revoked the Leh District Magistrate's order through which Mr. Wangchuk has been detained since September 26, 2025. He has "already undergone nearly half of the period of detention" under the NSA, the Ministry said.

The Ministry is not known to have exercised this provision for any detainee in the past.

The 1980 Act enables detention of an individual for up to a year, based on executive orders and without a trial in a court of law, on the grounds that the person poses a threat to national security or to prevent them from disrupting public order.

The release comes ahead of the Supreme Court hearing next week on a petition filed by Mr. Wangchuk's wife Gitanjali J. Angmo challenging the NSA order, and two days before a protest called by civil society groups in Leh and Kargil to demand constitutional safeguards for the Union Territory.

The Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance have decided to go ahead with the March 16 protest.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7

2 LPG carriers cross Strait of Hormuz, says official

Saptaparno Ghosh
M. Kalyanaraman
NEW DELHI/CHENNAI

Two liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) carriers, *Shivalik* and *Nanda Devi*, have crossed the Strait of Hormuz and are headed to India, Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Special Secretary at Ministry of Shipping and Waterways, said at an inter-ministerial press briefing on Friday.

"Of the 24 vessels with an Indian-flag operating in the Persian Gulf, LPG carriers *Shivalik* and *Nanda Devi* crossed the Strait of Hormuz early this morning safely, and are headed to India," Mr. Sinha said.

Shivalik is expected to reach Mundra Port by March 16, while *Nanda Devi* is expected to reach Kandla Port by March 17, he said.

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 8

U.S. bombs Iran's Kharg Island; Tehran hits back

U.S. forces 'obliterated' military targets on the island, says Trump; Iran threatens to strike oil, economic and energy facilities in the region linked to the U.S. if its oil infrastructure is targeted

Associated Press
DUBAI

A missile struck a helipad inside the U.S. Embassy compound in Baghdad of Iraq and debris from an intercepted Iranian drone hit an oil facility in the UAE on Saturday while U.S. President Donald Trump claimed military sites on an island vital to Iran's oil network were destroyed.

Mr. Trump said U.S. forces on Friday "obliterated" targets on Iran's Kharg Island, which is home to the primary terminal that handles the country's oil exports.

Meanwhile, an American official said 2,500 more marines and an amphibious assault ship are being sent to West Asia.

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf had warned on social media on Thursday that attacks on the islands on Iran's southern maritime frontier would cause Iran to "abandon all restraint," underscoring how central they are to the country's economy and security.

On Saturday, Iran's joint military command reiterated its threat that it will attack the U.S.-linked oil and energy facilities in the region if the Islamic Republic's oil infrastructure is hit.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7
'PEARL OF PERSIAN GULF' » PAGE 13

Rising tensions

The U.S. said it struck military targets on Kharg Island, a crucial hub in Iran's oil export network, as tensions escalate around the Strait of Hormuz

- Kharg Island hosts Iran's main oil export terminal and is central to the country's crude shipments to international markets. Disruption here could affect global oil supplies
- Donald Trump said U.S. forces 'obliterated' military sites on Kharg Island
- Trump warned Iran's oil infrastructure could be targeted next if shipping through the Strait of Hormuz is disrupted
- An American official said 2,500 more marines and an amphibious assault ship are being sent to West Asia

Source: GRAPHIC NEWS

NEARBY

Panel clears projects worth ₹4,824 crore

BENGALURU
The State-Level Single Window Clearance Committee (SLSWCC) has approved investments worth ₹4,824.31 crore in Karnataka on Saturday. » PAGE 5

UKP: DKS, Ministers to meet MPs in Delhi

HUBBALLI
To deliberate on objections raised by Andhra Pradesh on the Upper Krishna Project, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar and Ministers will travel to Delhi to meet MPs from the State. » PAGE 5

CLASSIFIEDS » PAGE 4
MAGAZINE » 8 PAGES

Grammy-Nominated Blues Powerhouse Sugaray Rayford Makes His India Debut

Long before he became one of the most powerful voices in contemporary blues, Sugaray Rayford was a young boy singing in church — discovering a voice that would one day carry the power, pain, and joy at the heart of the blues.

There are singers who perform the blues — and then there are those who seem to embody it. When the commanding voice of Sugaray Rayford fills a room, it carries the echoes of community churches, hard-lived experience, and the enduring spirit of a musical tradition that refuses to fade.

Blu Note with Sugaray Rayford, presented by the Prestige Centre for Performing Arts (PCPA) on Saturday, 28th March, introduces Indian audiences to one of the most electrifying voices in contemporary blues for the first time. The show marks Rayford's debut performance in India, and forms part of his World Kindness Tour 2026, a journey that blends powerful music with a message of connection and empathy across cultures. The evening is presented in collaboration with the National Centre for the Performing Arts Mumbai, where Rayford and his band will also perform the following evening.

Rayford's journey to international acclaim began in a church; born in Smith County, Texas, he sang gospel as a child, developing the deep, resonant voice that would later become his signature. Life took him through tough times before music claimed centre stage — and those lived experiences now resonate in every performance. Growing up, he was deeply influenced by blues legends such as B.B. King, Bobby "Blue" Bland, and Robert Johnson, artists who shaped the sound and spirit of the genre. His songs draw from the emotional core of blues, soul, and gospel traditions, delivered with a voice that critics have described as both thunderous and deeply expressive. Over the past decade, Rayford has emerged as one of the most compelling figures in modern blues, earning global recognition and a Grammy nomination for his album Somebody Save Me.

For this tour, Rayford is joined by a dynamic band that brings both energy and musical finesse to the stage. The ensemble features guitar prodigy Anthony Cullins, Drake "Munkihaid" Shining on keyboards, Allen Markel on bass, Derrick "DJ" Martin Jr. on saxophone, Julian "JuJu" Davis on trumpet, and Sky Garcia on drums.

Rayford often speaks about music as something that should both move and uplift listeners, blending an old-school blues sensibility with a contemporary voice. Towering in stature and stage presence alike, he is often described as a "big man with a bigger heart," yet it is the emotional honesty of his performances that leaves the most lasting impression.

For audiences in Bengaluru, this performance promises more than just a concert — it is a rare chance to witness an artist whose voice carries the past, present, and future of the blues in a single, unforgettable night.

Blu Note with Sugaray Rayford | Prestige Centre for Performing Arts | Sat, 28 March, 7:30 PM

Sabse Pehle Life Insurance

LIC
भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Aapke Saath

The 100-year plan!

LIC's
JEEVAN UMANG
UIN No.: 512N312V03 PLAN NO: 745
A Par, Non-Linked, Individual, Savings, Whole Life Insurance Plan

Get GUARANTEED Survival Benefit equal to 8% of Basic Sum Assured each year after the final premium, till Age 99 and lump sum maturity benefit on survival to Age 100.

FEATURES:
- Age Eligibility : 30 days to 55 years
- Minimum Basic Sum Assured : ₹ 2,00,000/-
- Maximum Basic Sum Assured : No limit
- Premium Paying Term : 15, 20, 25 and 30 years
- Policy Term : (100 minus age at entry) years

SPECIAL FEATURES:
- Life long risk cover till Age 100
- Bonus throughout the premium paying term
- Final additional bonus (if any)
- Loan facility

Our WhatsApp No. 8976862090 Say 'Hi'

For details, contact your Agent/Nearest LIC Branch/visit www.licindia.in

Download LIC Mobile App digital | Call Centre Services (022) 6827 6827 | Follow us : LIC India Forever

IRDAI Regn No.: 512

BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS. IRDAI or its officials do not involve in any activities of insurance business like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums, refund of amounts. Policyholders or the prospects receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

LIC/P1/2025-26/32/Eng

M BG-BGE

News in Frames

Out of work: Amid the fuel shortage due to the war in West Asia, lorries that deliver LPG cylinders from bottling plants to different parts of Tamil Nadu lie idle. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Stocking up: People carry home LPG cylinders on their two-wheelers from a depot in New Delhi. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Coal comeback: Workers at a soft coal godown in Lucknow. With commerical users turning to alternative fuels, demand for coal has risen. SANDEEP SAXENA

Stoves that defy shortage: Firewood stoves are being used following the LPG crisis at Samridhi@Kochi, a budget eatery jointly run by the Kochi Corporation and the Ernakulam District Mission of Kudumbashree as part of a hunger-free initiative in Kerala. THULASI KAKKAT

War lights a kitchen fire

West Asian conflict has snuffed out a clean cooking fuel in kitchens; facing a crisis, homes and eateries are looking at firewood and biomass to energise their cooking

When India's first LPG cylinders rolled into Pune households seventy years ago, many saw them as exotic objects. Burmah Shell, which was to become BPCL later, was the supplier. The large metal canisters that created a cool, blue flame seemed like a luxury in a country dependent largely on firewood and crop residues for its cooking needs. Kerosene stoves were modern innovations then. Some feared what came to be known as just the cylinder many decades later. The infrastructure for delivery was weak and growth in LPG usage remained tepid. Well into the 2000s, LPG was not the dominant cooking fuel even though the cylinder had become a household name in cities and large towns. A government scheme spearheaded a surge in LPG use. This surge was driven by imports from the Persian Gulf that came down to zero when the West Asia conflict erupted, disrupting Indian life that had yet to shake off the memory of the pandemic.

The Hindu's photographers have captured images of a population relearning how to cook with energy supplies that are going back to basics. Coal, firewood and everything in-between. Restaurants have slashed items from their menus. Hostels in colleges and schools too are cooking what would be energy-friendly dishes even if they are not the most liked. Induction stoves are selling like hot cakes. Meanwhile, two ships laden with LPG have left the Persian Gulf and are heading to India. But they will supply only two days of India's imports. India needs at least one such ship to call on its ports every day to return to normal.

Text by Dinesh Krishnan

Back to basics: A worker unloading traditional *tandoors* (coal/wood-based furnaces) from a van in Lucknow. SANDEEP SAXENA

20 YEARS OF BRILLIANT LIVING

MANA LIVE BRILLIANTLY

A LEGACY BUILT ON FIVE TIMELESS PILLARS OF BRILLIANT LIVING

SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE
A commitment to greener ecosystems and responsible developments.

INTELLIGENT SPACE
Homes crafted for balance, comfort, and vastu harmony.

INSPIRED COMMUNITIES
Creating spaces that foster connection and belonging.

THOUGHTFUL DESIGN
Where aesthetics meet purposeful planning.

ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE
Precision construction built for enduring value.

MANA LIVE BRILLIANTLY

PORTFOLIO OF OUR SIGNATURE DEVELOPMENTS

Avail Home Loan at 1% Interest*

Sarjapur-Whitefield Road
3 & 3.5 BHK Residences

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/210725/007939
PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/210325/007611

Kodathi, Off Sarjapur Road
3 & 4 BHK Residences

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/446/PR/091123/006409
PRM/KA/RERA/1251/446/PR/220125/007417

Sarjapur-ORR Tech Corridor
Premium **3 BHK** Residences

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/446/PR/041225/008303

Gattahalli Raod, Off Sarjapur Road
3 BHK Residences

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/150325/007585

Sarjapur Road, Behind Wipro Office
3 & 4 BHK Residences & Penthouses

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/446/PR/181223/006500

*Terms & Conditions Apply.

Alchemist/Clay

Begin your MANA home journey today.

CALL **080 3733 1414** or visit www.manaprojects.com

SCAN TO DISCOVER

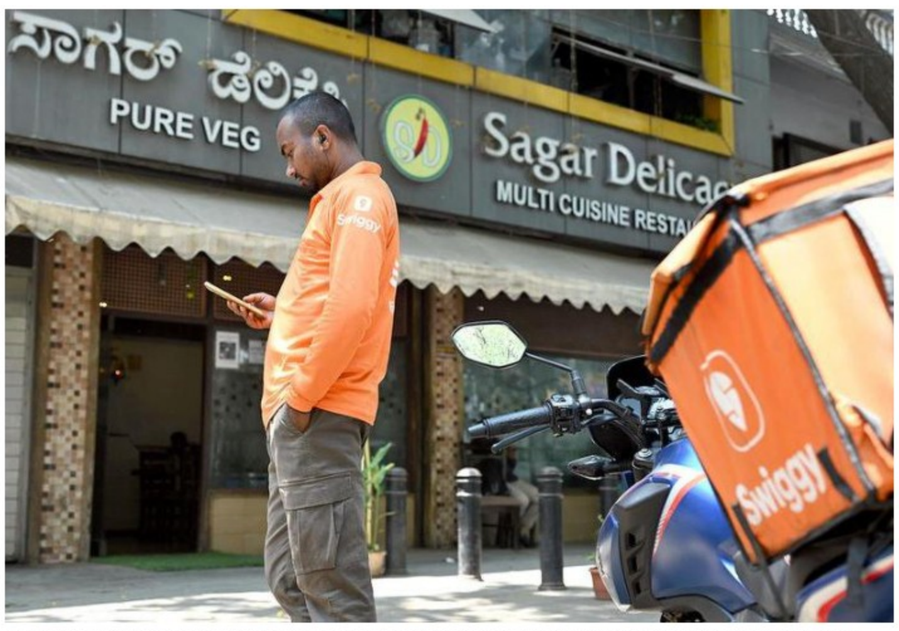
This advertisement is for general promotional purposes only and does not constitute an offer or commitment. Images and depictions are artistic impressions. Prospective purchasers must independently verify project details, specifications, statutory approvals, title, and applicable RERA registrations before entering into any transaction.

CREDAI BENGALURU

Commercial LPG shortage slashes food delivery orders, gig workers hit

Workers point out that the drop in orders has been most visible during peak meal hours, when restaurants typically receive the highest volume of online orders

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU



A gig worker waiting in front of a restaurant near Halasuru in Bengaluru on Saturday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Gig workers associated with food delivery platforms in Bengaluru said their incomes have fallen sharply, as the shortage of commercial LPG cylinders triggered by the ongoing West Asia crisis has forced several restaurants to temporarily shut down or scale back operations on online platforms.

The workers, whose earnings depend entirely on the number of deliveries they complete in a day, said the disruption has drastically reduced the volume of food orders on delivery apps. According to them, orders have fallen by nearly 50% to 70% over the past three days.

Before disruption

They said that before the disruption began, completing 30 to 35 deliveries a day was common. However, the number of available orders has now dropped sharply, with many of them managing fewer than 10 deliveries a day.

"Our earnings depend entirely on the number of orders we complete. On an average, a delivery brings us around ₹20 to ₹105 depending on the distance and incentives. Earlier, if we completed around 30 orders in a day, we could earn between ₹1,500 and ₹1,800 on an average. Now, with hardly eight or 10 orders coming in, the income has fallen sharply," said Abdul Razeek, a delivery worker associated with a food delivery platform.

The workers pointed out that the drop in orders has been most visible during peak meal hours, when restaurants typically receive the highest volume of online orders. With many establishments either closed or operating with restricted menus, they said the number of delivery requests on the apps has reduced significantly.

"From last two days, we have been waiting outside major outlets during peak hours, but many eateries have completely stopped accepting online orders or takeaway requests," said Rubal Issac, another delivery worker. The gig worker groups urged the State government to consider providing some form of immediate relief if the situation continues. "Many delivery workers rely on daily earnings to meet expenses such as fuel, rent and household costs, and sudden disruptions like this leave them with little financial security," they said.

'Bengaluru's wet waste can meet 20% of gas requirement of hotels in city'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Wet waste generated daily in Bengaluru has the potential to produce about 200 tonnes of biogas, accounting for nearly 20% of the total gas consumed by restaurants in the city.

This idea was put forth by Som Narayan, co-founder and director of Carbon Masters, which operates a biomethanisation plant in Koramangala. He made the suggestion during an inspection of the facility by M. Maheshwar Rao, Chief Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), on Saturday, pitching the idea of setting up more such units across the city.

Mr. Rao emphasised that the plan is ambitious and appears promising on paper, but implementation challenges will be inevitable. He directed officials to set up more biomethanisation centres in the city.

"A comprehensive study will be undertaken to produce biogas from wet waste in the city and to establish biogas plants in the GBA limits," he said.

Waste to biogas

Bengaluru produces about 3,000 to 3,500 tonnes of wet waste every day, according to data from Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML). Mr. Narayan said that about 200 tonnes of biogas can be produced if the entire amount of wet waste is processed using the biomethanisation technique. "Even if we assume Bengaluru needs 1,000 tonnes of gas every day, we have a great opportunity to produce 20% of the requirement. However, we have to develop such infrastructure," Mr. Narayan told *The Hindu*.

A biogas plant at the Kasa Rasa unit at Koramangala in Bengaluru. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

> A comprehensive study will be undertaken to produce biogas from wet waste and to establish biogas plants in the GBA limits
>
> **M. MAHESHWAR RAO**
> Chief Commissioner, Greater Bengaluru Authority

Currently, Koramangala's Kasa Rasa unit, where Mr. Narayan's company is carrying out the waste-to-gas process, has an installed capacity to process 8 tonnes of wet waste every day. The BSWML is now helping expand it to a capacity of 12 tonnes per day. The biogas generated at the station is being sold to a well-known eatery next to the plant for ₹70 per kg.

Stench

Stench is a major concern with waste-to-energy plants. However, Mr. Narayan argued that the Koramangala unit has never received any complaints.

He explained that they use an anaerobic process to generate biomethane, which prevents odour. Even the other byproduct is used to make bio-fertilisers. He noted that the stench issue usually arises only when legacy waste is stored for a long time.

"If we have properly pre-processed wet waste that can be used directly, the stench issue will never arise," he said. He proposed to Mr. Rao that if pre-processing is done at a different location, it would be easier to set up such plants in different wards.

Mr. Rao said that establishing such decentralised centres in city corporations would require around two to three acres of land. He added that if source segregation is ensured with strict norms, even pre-processing stage can be eliminated.

Current scenario

According to the BSWML data, 12 biomethanisation units have been built in the city, but only six are operational. The rest are undergoing redevelopment. Among these, five have the capacity to process five tonnes of wet waste per day. The other is the Koramangala unit.

From the operational plants, approximately 30 kg to 50 kg of biogas is produced every day and sold at a price of ₹70 per kg. This generates an income of around ₹8,400 per day. In addition, the BSWML has taken up the construction of four new decentralised biomethanation plants.

A larger project is the Kannahalli unit, where biogas production will be taken up with an installed capacity to process 1,000 tonnes per day. If these plans materialise, Bengaluru's wet waste can be effectively monetised end-to-end, according to officials.

Man held for cheating devotees of ₹2.15 lakh

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Turuvekere police of Tumakuru district have arrested a man for allegedly cheating devotees of over ₹2.15 lakh by promising to arrange loans under a government scheme.

Job scheme

According to the police, the accused had visited Sri Adi Shakti Kollapuradamma Temple at Choudenahalli village in Turuvekere taluk posing as a devotee. He allegedly convinced members of the temple that he could help them obtain ₹10 lakh loans under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP). Trusting his claims, seven people paid ₹25,000 each and another person paid ₹40,000, totalling ₹2,15,000.

Based on the complaint, a case was registered at the Turuvekere Police Station under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

The police said that the accused has been identified as Somashekhar H.K., 46, a real estate businessman from Hullenahalli, Bagur hobli in Channarayapatna taluk of Hassan district. He was residing near Hoysala Nagar, close to Huliyuramma temple in Sunkadakatte, Bengaluru.

The accused was arrested by a special investigation team.

KSRTC to operate 2,000 additional buses to clear Ugadi and Id rush

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has announced the operation of 2,000 additional buses to manage the increased passenger demand during the upcoming Ugadi and Id festivals.

The corporation said that in addition to the existing schedules the special services will operate on March 18, 19, and 20 to facilitate smooth travel for festival travellers. Special return services will also be arranged from various intra- and inter-State destinations to Bengaluru on March 22 to accommodate passengers returning after the holidays. The buses will depart from the Kempe Gowda Bus Station to several key destinations including Dharmasthala, Kukke Subrahmanya, Shivamogga, Hassan, Mangaluru, Kundapur, Sringeri, Horanadu, Hubballi, Belagavi, Gokarna, Raichur, Kalaburagi, Ballari, and Bidar, among others. Services will also be operated to inter-State destinations such as Tirupati, Vijayawada and Hyderabad, a release stated. Additionally, special buses will operate from the Mysuru Road Bus Station towards Mysuru, Hunsur, Periyapatna, Virajpet, Kushalnagar, and Madikeri to cater to passengers travelling to Kodagu and surrounding areas. The KSRTC has also announced a 5% discount on fares for groups of four or more passengers booking together and a 10% discount on return tickets when onward and return journeys are booked simultaneously.

It said that additional buses would also be deployed from taluk and district bus stands depending on demand.

In addition to the existing schedules the special services will operate on March 18, 19, and 20 to facilitate smooth travel for festival travellers. FILE PHOTO

Man murders live-in partner, attempts to stage it as suicide

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 26-year-old man was arrested for allegedly murdering his live-in partner following a quarrel and attempting to portray the crime as suicide that took place in the Varthur police station limits.

The victim, Ranjitha, 24, a native of Ponnampet in Kodagu district, was found dead at a rented house in Kodathi area.

According to the police, the accused, Ayyappa, was already married but had separated from his wife. He allegedly promised to marry Ranjitha and convinced her to move to Bengaluru. The couple had been living together for the past two months. They had frequent quarrels after Ranjitha insisted that Ayyappa divorce his wife and marry her.

During a heated argument on Thursday, Ayyappa allegedly strangled Ranjitha with a wire, killing her on the spot. He allegedly tried to stage the incident as a suicide. He reportedly created a scene to make it appear that Ranjitha had taken her life and informed the landlord before shifting her to a hospital. However, the police found injury marks on her neck. Further investigation revealed the suicide was staged.

Timings
BENGALURU

SUNDAY, MAR. 15		
RISE	06:27	SET 18:30
RISE	03:39	SET 15:19
MONDAY, MAR. 16		
RISE	06:26	SET 18:30
RISE	04:22	SET 16:12
TUESDAY, MAR. 17		
RISE	06:26	SET 18:30
RISE	05:03	SET 17:05

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	33	18
Bengaluru	33	20

Bengaluru Today
33°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night also will be slight cool.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2026
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

BNP flags discrepancies in electoral rolls

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP) claimed on Saturday that it has identified large-scale systemic discrepancies in the electoral rolls prepared for the upcoming civic polls.

A release stated that preliminary verifications revealed a trend where residents from the same street, layout, or apartment complexes were being spread across multiple polling booths, leading to incorrect ward mapping.

This structural failure means that hundreds of voters are currently assigned to wards where they do not actually reside, threatening the very foundation of the local democratic process, it stated. "To address this, the BNP has submitted supporting data to the Election Commission, pointing to the absence of proper "sectioning" as the root cause," the release added.

"As per the Election Commission of India's manual, proper sectioning requires that residents from the same physical geography, be it an apartment complex or a street, be grouped together within a single section of a polling booth," the statement said.

Flaw in list

Srikanth Narasimhan, founder of BNP, said, "The issue stems from a flaw in the preparation of the corporation voter list, where entire polling booths are being mapped into a single ward, even though the voters within those booths belong to different geographic wards."

The BNP's examination of data from ward no. 34 (Chikkathoguru) and ward no. 33 (Naganathapura) in the Bengaluru South City Corporation confirms this, Mr. Narasimhan said.

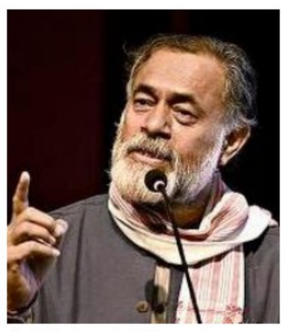
Yogendra Yadav flags 'anomalies' in voter roll revision

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

"If the purpose of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) was genuinely to correct voter lists, there would not be voter rolls where the names of Bihari migrants appear in Kannada or Tamil," political activist Yogendra Yadav said, alleging that the exercise was designed in a way to disproportionately affect vulnerable sections of society, particularly migrant workers.

Speaking at an event on "How do we tackle SIR in Karnataka", organised by Jagrut Karnataka and Bharat Jodo Abhiyan on Saturday, Mr. Yadav claimed that in the Bihar rolls there were names of Bihari migrants written in Kannada and Tamil. He presented this anomaly before the Supreme Court, he added.

Mr. Yadav criticised the proposed revision of electoral rolls, arguing that it should not be seen as a routine administrative exercise but as part of a larger political context "managing" India's electoral processes.


Political analyst Yogendra Yadav during a discussion on Special Intensive Revision, in Bengaluru on Saturday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Placing the issue in what he described as a strategic framework aimed at altering the "architecture of democracy", Mr. Yadav said recent political developments should be understood through the lens of "Desh, Kaal, Patra" (place, time, person)- referring to the delimitation of parliamentary constituencies, the proposal for One Nation, One Election and changes to the voter base through SIR. "These three things may look separate but they are connected and are aimed at managing the democracy," he said.

If delimitation is conducted based on population changes reflected in the next census, he argued that several southern and eastern States could lose representation in the Lok Sabha. "States such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, along with Odisha, Karnataka, West Bengal and Punjab, could see a reduction in their parliamentary seats, while several Hindi-speaking northern States could gain additional representation," he argued.

The political consequence of such a shift, he said, would be that regions where the BJP already enjoys strong support could gain more seats, while regions where it faces stronger opposition could see their parliamentary weight reduced.

Mr. Yadav said the most fundamental misconception about SIR is that it is merely a revision of electoral rolls. "This is not a revision. It is a fresh writing of the voter list from scratch," he said. In a normal revision process, the existing voter list forms the starting point, with names added or removed due to deaths, migration or new voters reaching voting age. Under the SIR exercise, however, every voter must submit a fresh enumeration form in order to be included in the electoral roll.

According to him, this means that even individuals who have been registered voters for decades and have participated in multiple elections could lose their voting rights if they fail to submit the required application within the stipulated time. In such cases, he said, the Election Commission could argue that the name was not "deleted" but simply not included because the individual had not applied again. This has never happened in the history, he said.

"This is National Register of Citizens (NRC) from the back door," he said.

He further argued that similar exercises elsewhere have functioned primarily as a mechanism for deleting names rather than correcting inaccuracies.

Irregularities

At the same time, Mr. Yadav said several irregularities in electoral rolls have remained unaddressed. Referring to material he said he presented before the Supreme Court, Mr. Yadav claimed that voter lists in Bihar contained around five lakh duplicate names and more than 21 lakh households with over 10 registered voters each, cases which, according to the Election Commission rules, should trigger special verification.

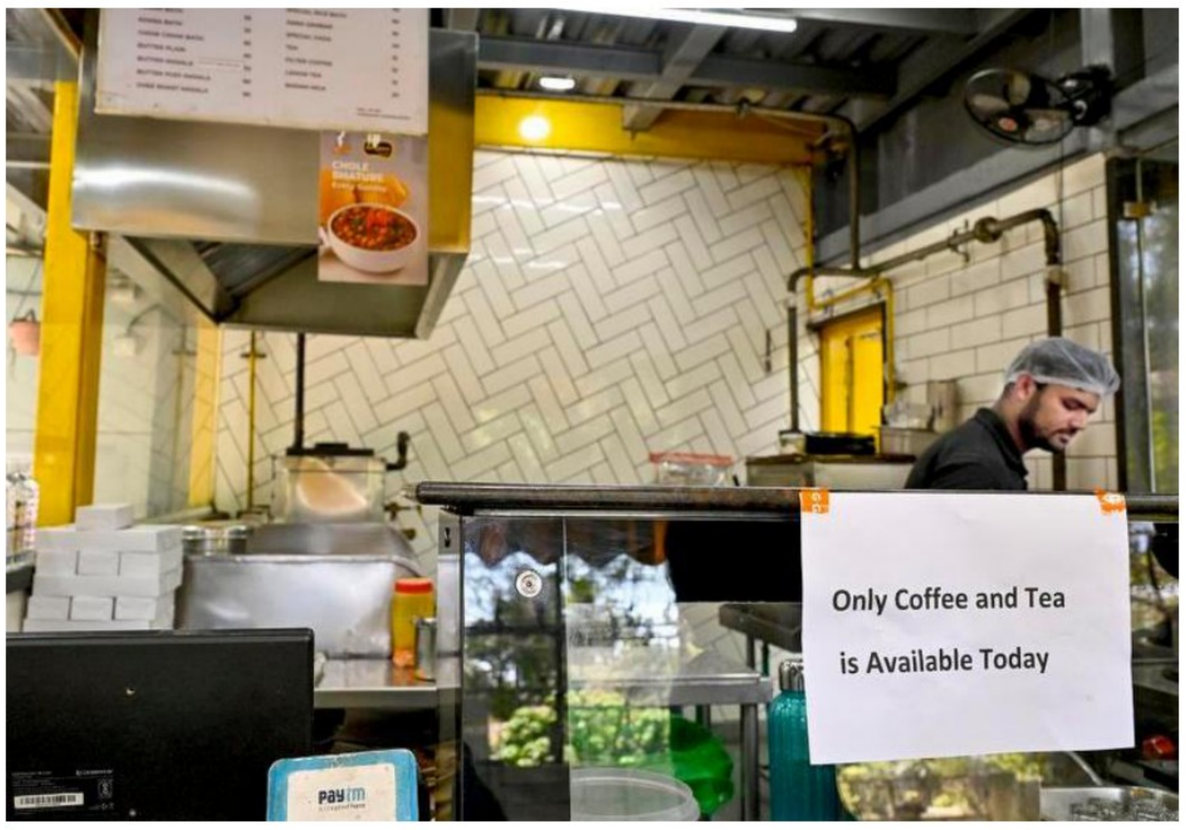
Essential commodity: A worker cutting wooden logs at a firewood shop in Neyyattinkara, Thiruvananthapuram. The price of firewood has shot up exponentially with the increased demand from hotels and households. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Eternal flame: A traditional cuisine restaurant in Neyyattinkara has used firewood for its cooking requirements since its establishment. The eatery is patronised for its unique menu. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Global crisis, local impact : People waiting in a queue for LPG cylinders in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, following shortage in supplies. Although the government has cautioned against panic buying, the queues persist. IMRAN NISSAR

Heart and hearth: A woman at Faqir Gujri on the outskirts of Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir cooks on a traditional clay stove. IMRAN NISSAR

Hunger's fuel: Members of a local NGO serve food to the poor and needy in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. The office-bearers of the NGO say they will have to rely on firewood, as they have run out of LPG cylinders. K.V.S GIRI



Crisis brews: A hotel in Bengaluru has drastically reduced its menu to just coffee and tea. Earlier, it offered a wide variety of snacks and meals. K. MURALI KUMAR

Amendment Bill sparks outrage among transgender community in State

Shilpa Elizabeth
BENGALURU

The community fears that the Bill, if passed, will strip the identity, access to rights, safety and legal protection of a large section of all already marginalised transgender community.

Members of the Transgender community and trans rights activists in Karnataka have expressed shock and vehemently opposed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026 that has proposed significant changes to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

Terming it a shocking attempt to take back the hard-won rights of the transgender community, they fear that the Bill, if passed, will strip the identity, access to rights, safety and legal protection of a large section of all already marginalised transgender community.

Narrowing definitions

The Bill narrows the definition of "transgender person" to those having sociocultural identities such as kinner, hujra, aravani, jogta, or eunuch, persons with specified intersex variations or congenital variations at birth, and persons or children forced to assume a transgender identity through mutilation or castration.

Further, it excludes persons with different sexual orientations and self-perceived sexual identities.

Akkai Padmashali, who works for the rights of gender minorities, termed the Bill extremely regressive. Ms. Padmashali, who is a part the Karnataka State Gender and Sexuality Minorities Coalition for Convergence, called it "exclusionary" and noted that the amendment, instead of expanding the rights of the transgender community, contracts them.

"The only option for a transgender person under the Bill is a traditional identity. Those who see their identity on a spectrum fall outside this conservative new definition proposed by the amendment," the coalition members pointed out. In 2014, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) v. Union of India ruling said that gender identity was a matter of personal autonomy and self-determination, and that a person has the right to identify their gender without medical procedures.

> The amendment, instead of expanding the rights of the transgender community, contracts them
>
> **AKKAI PADMASHALI**
> Transgender activist

The activists pointed out that by depriving people of the right to self-identify their gender, the Bill is trying to destroy the framework set by the Supreme Court through the NALSA judgment.

Astha Kalarikkal, executive director at Raahi, a Bengaluru-based NGO that works for the rights of transgender men, said that it was only after the NALSA judgment that more members of the community started getting legal recognition and benefits, whereas the current Bill was trying to erase all of that.

"The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2016, also attempted similar things by proposing that a medical committee's approval was required for gender determination. It was vehemently opposed and self-determination was achieved. Now they are trying to bring back the same restrictions which go against personal liberty," she said. While the existing law allows the District Magistrate (DM) to issue certificate of identity and ID card to transgender applicants, the proposed amendment seeks to constitute a Medical Board to provide reommendations to the DM before granting approval.

Transmen left out

The activists also alleged that the definition as per the proposed Bill sought to erase communities such as trans men, gender non binary, and gender fluid persons.

"Only a small faction within the larger transgender community has the cultural backup of the traditional communities. None of the traditional communities mentioned in the definition identifies transmen, who are one of the most invisible within the larger community itself. Within trans women community also, there are a lot of people who don't have a traditional identity," said Ms. Kalarikkal.

Sana Suman, trans rights activist and founder of Swatantra, called the proposed Bill undemocratic and upsetting. She suggested that it would lead to further discrimination and discourage people from disclosing their gender identity, especially if they did not belong to the communities the Bill mentions.

"There are people who are beyond these conventional classifications, who haven't got their gender reassignment surgeries done or cannot afford it. What about all of them?" she asked.

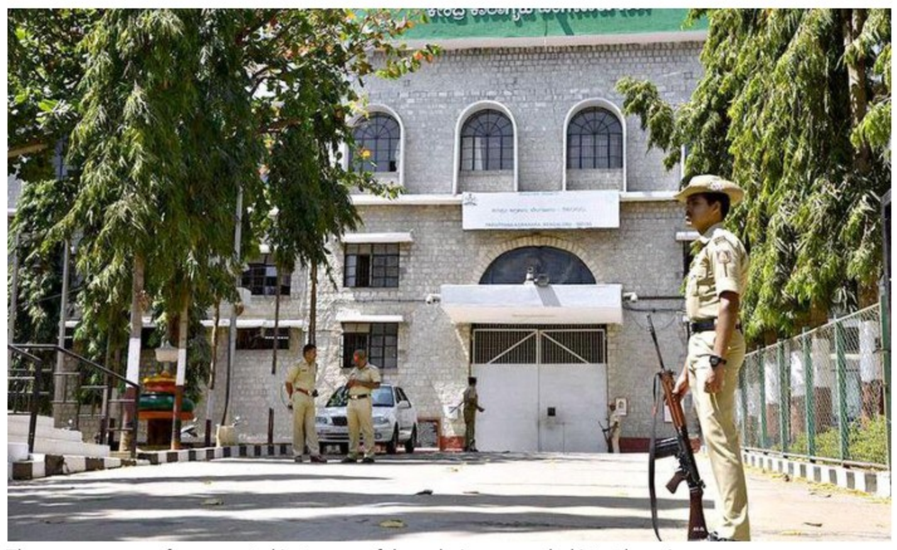
To curb use of narcotics, drug tests planned for jail inmates

Under the initiative, inmates will be tested for ganja, heroin, cocaine, etc. In the first phase, prisoners will undergo screening

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a bid to curb the use of narcotic substances inside prisons, the Karnataka Prisons Department has decided to conduct drug tests for inmates across all prisons in the State.

The move comes after repeated instances of drugs being smuggled into the prisons. On March 9, an attempt was reported at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison, where a staff member allegedly tried to bring narcotic substances into the jail.


The move comes after repeated instances of drugs being smuggled into the prisons. FILE PHOTO

According to officials, a similar incident was reported at the Ramanagara prison where an inmate, who had been lodged in the jail about 12 days earlier, was caught while attempting to smuggle ganja concealed in his sleeves. The inmate initially tried to mislead the prison authorities, claiming he had quit drugs long ago and that the smuggling attempt was accidental. However, a medical examination later confirmed that he was under the influence of narcotics.

Taking note of such incidents, Director General of Prisons Alok Kumar decided to introduce systematic drug testing for inmates across prisons in the State. "The idea of identifying drug addicts in the prisons and containing the supply chain is to help prevent crimes linked to the drug menace in society. This initiative is probably the second-of-its-kind in the country after Punjab," said Mr. Kumar.

Under the initiative, inmates will be tested for substances such as ganja, heroin and cocaine. In the first phase, a group of prisoners in all jails will undergo screening.

The tests will be conducted by prison medical officers, with technical support from National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru.

Officials said, "The testing exercise is aimed at identifying the types of drugs being consumed and understanding the pattern of substance abuse within prisons so that appropriate measures can be taken."

During the ongoing process, about 20 inmates reportedly refused to undergo the tests, while some others were found attempting to manipulate the results by diluting urine samples with water.

No criminal case

The officials clarified that inmates who test positive for drug consumption would not face criminal cases. Instead, they would be offered counselling and medical treatment. "Prisoners found to be severely addicted will be admitted to hospitals for de-addiction therapy," the officials added.

The central prison also has a 40-bed de-addiction centre dedicated to the rehabilitation of inmates.

The officials said the programme aims to adopt a holistic approach that includes identifying addicts, tracking the chain of drug supply into prisons, and rehabilitating inmates in stages through counselling and treatment.

The initiative is modelled on a similar programme implemented in Punjab and has been designed to be carried out systematically across Karnataka prisons.

Suspected ganja smuggler from Bangkok caught in dramatic chase

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A suspected ganja smuggler, who escaped from the custody of airport customs officials, was caught after a dramatic chase near the Devanahalli-Doddaballapura junction on Saturday.

According to the police, the suspect had arrived from Bangkok and was being escorted for a medical examination by Airport Customs head constable Vishal Chandal at around 7 a.m. During the transit, the suspect reportedly told the officer that he wanted to go to the washroom, but under the pretext, fled from custody.

The customs officer alerted the Namma-112 emergency helpline, which informed the Hoysala-181 patrol vehicle attached to the Devanahalli Police Station. The police personnel reached the spot within three minutes.

The patrol team spotted the suspect at a distance and launched a chase. Following a nearly two-km pursuit on foot, the police managed to apprehend him. The accused was later handed over to the Devanahalli police.

The police said that since a case had already been registered by the Narcotics Control Bureau, the suspect was formally arrested. Further action was being taken.

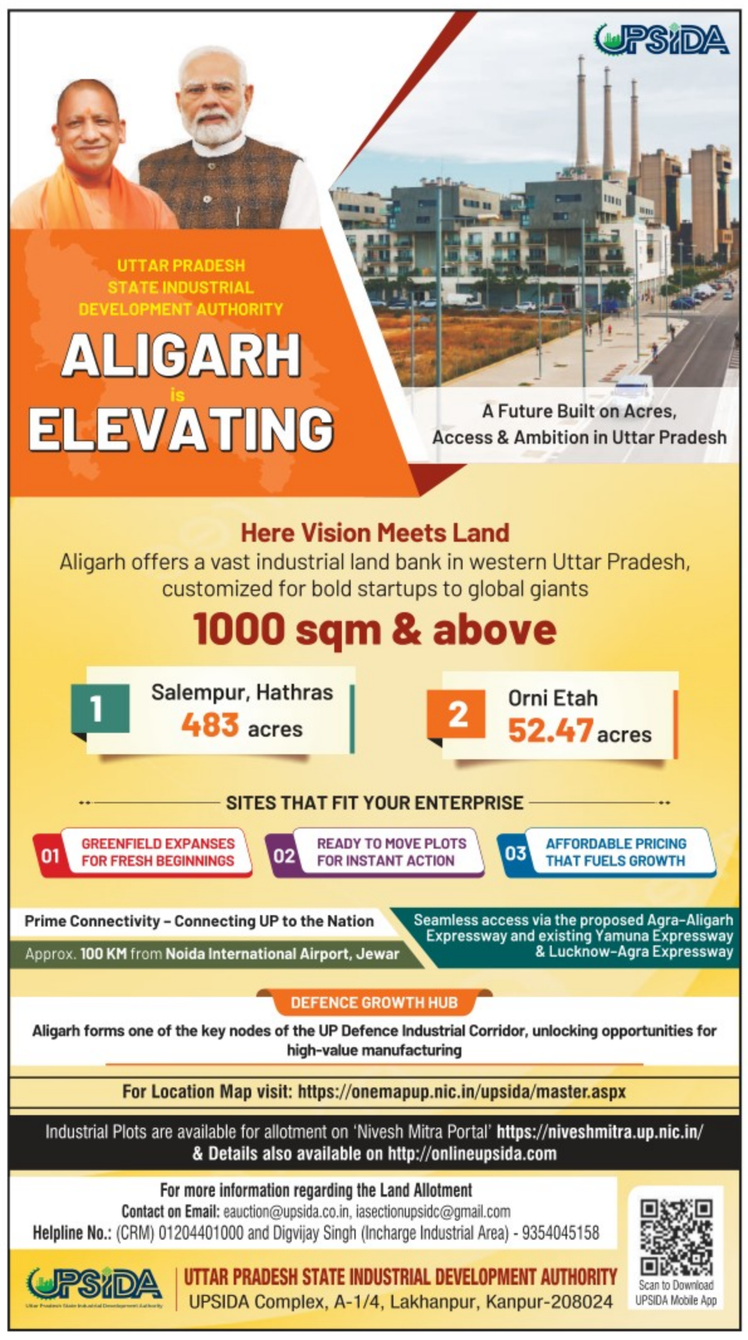
Foreign tourists facing travel disruptions can contact Tourism Dept.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Tourism Department of Karnataka has urged foreign tourists who are facing issues related to visas and travel disruptions to contact the department for assistance.

"Due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, international travel has become uncertain. Foreign tourists currently in Karnataka who are facing travel disruptions or visa-related issues are encouraged to contact the department for assistance," a statement noted.

Minister for Tourism H.K. Patil said the department was fully prepared to manage visa concerns and provide the necessary support to foreign guests during this difficult time. Tourists can reach out to the helpline 89706 50021.



जवाहरलाल स्नातकोत्तर आयुर्विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान
JAWAHARLAL INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH
(स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के अधीन राष्ट्रीय महत्व का संस्थान)
(An Institution of National Importance under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare)
भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, धन्वंतरि नगर, पुदुच्चेरी / Dhanvantari Nagar, Puducherry- 605 006
फोन/Phone: 0413-2296022 वेबसाइट / Website: www.jipmer.edu.in ई-मेल/e-mail: jipmer.deputation@gmail.com

No. JPADMN-1REC03(1)/1/2025 **Dated: 07.03.2026**

Applications are invited for **one post** of **DEPUTY DIRECTOR (ADMIN),** at JIPMER, Puducherry, **Level 13** as per 7th CPC **on deputation basis,** from eligible Officers of Central / State / U.T. Governments / Statutory / Autonomous Bodies / Government Universities / Government Research and Development Organizations etc.

Details of essential criteria and application format are available at **www.jipmer.edu.in**, and the last date for receipt of applications is **20.04.2026 (Monday) till 4:30 P.M.**

DIRECTOR

APPOINTMENT

The Lawrence School
Lovedale, Ooty - 643 003, The Nilgiris (TN)
Phone : 0423 2442552
Website : www.thelawrenceschool.org

The Lawrence School, Lovedale a premier co-educational institution Invites application for suitable candidates for the post of :

1. Catering Manager (Fixed Term Contract) Any Degree + 1-year Diploma in Catering Management from a recognized university (OR) Degree / 3-year Diploma in Catering Management from a recognized university (OR) Officer/JCO rank with Catering Management experience in Category 'A' Armed Forces establishments (IMA, NDA, OTA, INA or AFA). With minimum of 10 years of experience, preferably in an Educational Institution.

2. Political Science Teacher - Postgraduate in Political Science with a B.Ed. degree from a recognized university and a minimum of 3 years of experience in handling classes 11 & 12 in CBSE schools.

3. Geography Teacher - Postgraduate in Geography with a B.Ed. degree from a recognized university and a minimum of 3 years of experience in handling classes 11 & 12 in CBSE schools.

4. Nurse (Fixed Term Contract) With Diploma or Degree in nursing and minimum 5 years of experience, preferably in handling School children.

Suitable candidates may send their resume along with testimonials and a recent photograph to **resume@thelawrenceschool.org,** clearly mentioning the post applied for within 10 days. Only shortlisted candidates will be called for interview. The school offers competitive remuneration along with other perks.

HEADMASTER

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Classifieds

thehinduads.com

LIFE MADE SIMPLE

THE HINDU

Matrimonial

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

BENGALI

25/164 FAIR slim girl , M.Sc Chemistry only child , Debari Gon, parents (Scientist / Prof) Chennai seeks educated brahmin groom. Ph: 7358591856

COSMOPOLITAN

MALAYALEE CATHOLIC parents seek alliance for their daughter 29/ 158cm, B.Tech., MS., working in Netherlands. Contact 9600017351

HINDU LINGAYAT telugu (veera shaiva & jangam) 28/172 /B Tech CS top institute (2014–2018) job for 3 years 18 lakhs PA (2018 TO 2021) preparation for UPSC upto interview (2021 TO 2026) want to persue her career again / passive income 21 lakhs PA (through assets 6cr created by parents) parents gazetted officers seeks well educated & well placed good natured bride groom CNB 9090363659

BEAUTIFUL BRAHMIN 30, 165cm, educated (BE/MBA), accomplished. Seeks compatible, VEG groom. Cultured family. Lang. no bar. Call/ WA 9345634365

DOCTOR

ROMAN CATHOLIC, MD (Anaesthesiology), Reputed School, College, 27 yrs, Fair, Highly Educated Family in Chennai, Seeks Doctors Catholic groom, WhatsApp Profile – 7550065082

PARENTS OF Obstetrician & Gynaecologist MBBS MS F.MAS 91 Born 158cm Gavara Naidu CNB looking for suitable well settled groom 9443394490

SEEKING GROOM for my daughter born Dec 1993 MS General Surgery doing 3rd year MCh in Neuro Surgery ht 160 cm from PG Doctor or suitably qualified preferably from Mudaliar/ Pillai Contact 7904339374

GROOM WANTED for 32 years Doctor MS (opthal) Senior Resident cadre. Inter caste parents (Father SC and Mother Telugu). Seeks Doctors groom only. Contact No. 8148399916 / 9003232279

HINDU VISWAKARMA Beautiful, rich 5'.5"/1994/ MBBS+MD+DNB / Bangalore /doctor bride (f– IAS) requires MBBS+PG– Viswakarma/ forward Hindu doctor groom (preferably willing to settle @ Bangalore) Mobile: 9743403900

DKV 29 Lady Radiologist, MD, Divorced, Chennai 9047119910

Alliance invited for a compassionate, driven bride, 28, Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist (MBBS, DNB), 156 cm, fair, raised in a distinguished Tamil family (Udayar) with deep roots in Chennai. We seek a groom of similar professional standing—ideally a doctor—from a family that values integrity, mutual respect, and continuous learning with an ambition to build a meaningful life together. Family enquiries only.

Ct: 98410 78080

Seeking Groom for my Daughter born Sep 1991, MBBS, MD Pathology (2nd year) in Chennai, 165cm, seeks suitable PG Doctor, CA, Engineer, from well Settled Telugu Naidu or Other Backward Community. Ct: 98401 96667.

LEGALLY SEPARATED Medical Foctor 32yrs, fair and good looking, from a well to do family, with a lively 8 year old son, seeks a life partner. Looking for a genuine Hindu companion. Must be happy to accept son as own. Willing to meet and chat to decide compatibility. Whatsapp Number– 89390 68797 Timings (3 to 5pm)

Fair, Cultured, Good Looking, Slim, Doctor Girl 36/165 MD, Cardiac Anesthesiologist, Chennai based doctor family Father Keralite Nair Mother from Tamilnadu. Looking for Doctor groom or Engineer from respectable family.

98400 50381 / 98409 85383

THE HINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/ company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

DOCTOR

HINDU/ NAIDU 91 born Dr. Girl MBBS MD Simham / Magam seeks MD, MS, MCH boy, any Naidu / any Tamil BC / MBC. Contact Parents: 94446 73311

ENGINEER

Mudaliar / Vanniar 31Y /165cm Doctor MBBS, fellowship in Diabetology seeks Engineer Grooms. Ph: 94444 54188

ENGLISH

BEAUTIFUL, WARM–HEARTED, well–traveled and educated, US–based Tanzanian Christian lawyer, 44. Seeks compatible, family–oriented and well–settled groom, willing to relocate. Contact: valence.couture0@icloud.com. Serious inquiries only.

GOVT / QUASI GOVT

Bengali Bride: Graduate (35 Years, 149 cm) Pursuing Music; Parents seek a Bengali / South Indian Boy (37-40 years) working in NCR. Contact: 9560647111.

MALAYALAM

✔ **HINDU EZHAVA girl, 26 yrs, 155 cm, Star Aswathy, PG, working in reputed MNC. Native Thrissur, settled Bangalore. Slim, good looking, upper middle class family, parents working professionals. Seeking post graduate, Malayali Ezhava groom, MNC employed, from respectable, well settled family. Send photo, full biodata WhatsApp: 9742221346, 9880220199.**

HINDU EZHAVA girl, Divorcee, 37/166 cm, Assistant Professor in Central University, New Delhi. Proposals invited from those working in New Delhi/ North India/ Abroad. 9447400724, 7994313295.

EZHAVA GIRL, TVM, Bharani, 31, B.Tech Mechanical, Civil Service Aspirant & teaching faculty. 9495594765.

KANNADA

BRIDEGROOM WANTED
FOR
KANNADA SHIVALI BRAHMIN
AGED 29, BORN - AUG '96.
WELL SETTLED. B.ARCH & MBA,
OWN HOUSE AT CHENNAI,
PRESENTLY WORKING
AT HYDERABAD **EARNING**
20LAKHS PER ANNUM
HEIGHT - 5.2.
~ SEEKS ~
SUITABLE BRIDEGROOM
FROM SAME CASTE
BRIDE FATHER
INDUSTRIALIST
BRIDE MOTHER
CENTRAL GOVT.
ASST COMMISSIONER
Respond with photo & Full details
sanjusanjana99@yahoo.com

NRI

NRI GROOM wanted-Nair girl, 52, Msc PhD, Scientist, never married, US ctzn Chicago.Malayalam/Tamil US residing boys only contact: 9895824803

ALLIANCE INVITED for 35–year–old, 5'4", MS–educated, accomplished professional, divorced, working in New Jersey, USA. Belongs to a cultured Aggarwal community from North India. Seeking professionally qualified, well–settled groom residing in USA. Caste no bar. Please contact 7838895369, 9990374471

Tamil RC / 28yrs / B.Tech / MS / Pursuing PHD in Toronto seeks Christian groom in Canada. Mail to - Judejd@rediffmail.com

IAS / ALLIED SERVICES

MBBS Brahmin B'Ful girl bsd in Raipur (Chhattisgarh), Pursuing MS,1997, Seeks Well Settled handsome boy Prefer Civil services/ Medical. Upper Caste no bar # 9826180684

TAMIL

✔ **MUSLIM GIRL 38 well mannered invites qualified, working, unmarried Tamil Muslim Groom. 9444235779**

CSI NADAR Girl 28/173 B.com (CPA) working in MNC Hyderabad, seeks qualified post graduate (any) city based groom working in Chennai, Bangalore or Hyderabad. CNB. Ct:9884747500

CHRISTIAN 31 Fair Beautiful PG MNC Chennai 15L/a. Prefer Well settled Religious Christian boy. 9840345969

CHRISTIAN, 33, MS, Doctor, Rich, 30 lakhs. PH: 8138900316

MUSLIM, 35, B.Tech, Private, 20 lakhs. PH:8138900470

HINDI

BRIDEGROOM WANTED

Age: 35 / 5'1" highly educated self-employed, Agarwal girl in Chennai from affluent family seeks suitable life partner.

Must be Chennai Resident.

Whatsapp No. 98410 60505

No Broker Please

TAMIL

CHRISTIAN, 23, BDS, Upper Middle class. PH:8138901281

CHRISTIAN, 39, Private, 30 Lakhs, MHRM. PH:8137003263

CHRISTIAN, DOCTOR, 38 Years Unmarried, Well Settled Family. Seeks Unmarried Doctor Groom. Ct: 7550286805

CHRISTIAN SPRITUAL homeloving affectionate Good looking girl 26/ 151/ B.Arch.Seeks God fearing/ Clean habits well qualified boy Ct: 9025608385

CSI CHRISTIAN, 35/154, Fair, MBBS., MD Govt. Doctor Girl Chennai, Seeks well placed Protestant Christian Groom. Contact:84382 78915

MUSLIM, 35, M.Tech, 20 lakhs. Ph: 8137001257

CHRISTIAN, RC NADAR, 23, BDS, Upper middle class. Ph: 7356483111

ONLY DAUGHTER, 32, B.Tech(Hons), DLL & AL, Sub Registrar (TN Govt), Father– Ex CRPF, Wealthy family Gavara Naidu seeks civil services–IAS, IPS, IRS, Group 1–DC/DSP, Doctor– MD/MS groom. Caste no bar. 9003450802

WELL EDUCATED, 37, Divorcee Seeks Compatible Groom. Caste No Bar. Call / WA 9489695984.

SOZHIYAVELLALAR PILLAI Age 31 BE (CSE) Working in Pvt Sector Chennai, Seeks Groom Preferable from Pillai/Mudaliar Age 31–34, BE Working In IT Field Employed in Chennai / India / Abroad. Ct Gowdhaman 9342276143

SAIVA PILLAI, 28 /170cm, B.E, Working 16L/PA, Seeks same Caste, Well Groom, aged 28 & 30 yrs. 9840315397

DKV HINDU Pallan 29 MBBS Doctor Aswini Mesham Father Mother Doctor Seeks Doctor Only. 9443151045, 9442924441.

CASTE NO bar, 25yrs, BE, Elite business family, Seeks Suitable Groom Contact: 9952619776

CASTE NO Bar, 25yrs, MS (UK),Well Educated background & Landlord, Seeks Suitable Groom Contact 6385293227

MUDALIYAR SUBCAST BDS 34years well Settled Family. In and Around Chennai. Ct: 8637481104 & 9486531194

HINDU NAIR 31/168 MTech PhD Australia seeks wellsettled professional CNB Australia only Geetham9884858014

✔ **TAMIL VISWAKARMA,** 26 years, 56 with a wheatish complexion, is a Senior Designer earning 9 LPA. A graduate in Textile Design from NIFT – National Institute of Fashion Technology, Chennai, she belongs to Magaram, Avitam 1 Padam, and seeks a professional groom. Contact: 9962863038.

THULUVA VELLALA, 26/162cm ,BE.,MBA, Employed,Revathi,Parents Employed (MNC/Govt) seeks Well Settled Professionally Qualified Groom 9952013212

HINDU, 26, Anycaste, Govt, Nurse, 20 lakhs. PH:8138900553

HINDU SC AD 26/151,MSC Thiruvonam Magaram Fair Good Looking Chennai. Seeks Govt /Pvt Employed Groom From Chennai Good Family. wh:9629412661

MUDALIAR (CNB) : 30/ Good Looking B.E,MS (USA)., Data scientist, Hyd, Well settled Family, seeks groom Eng/Doct – Bang/Hyd – 8925019776

Hindu SC/PR aged 34 yrs B.E working in Public sector bank as Manager Rs 1 Lac PM 1st Marriage seeks compatible employed groom Ct: 89036 70160

HINDU / SC / PR aged 36yrs B.Tech SWE in Chennai Rs.1 Lac PM 1st marriage seeks compatible employed groom Ct: 89036 70160

GROOM WANTED Hindu Nadar 29yrs BE MS working software 1.5Lp/m well educated family 9841329471/ 9380791999

RICH MUDALIYAR, 35yrs, BE, MBA, Elite business family, Seeks Suitable Groom. Contact: 6385293227

TAMIL

VANNIYAR, BDS, 33, Revathi, Employed, middle class family, Groom from same community needed. 98409 61251

MUDALIAR 37 165 cm BE Professional Chennai seeks High Prof Busi Chennai Groom CNB Geetham 9884858014

AGAMUDI MUDALIAR, Elite Family, 34/ 165, Mirugasim, 8 Raghu, PG (HR, MNC) Seeks MS, M.Tech Groom 9176780777

HINDU, 38, UK, any caste, PhD, 10 crores. Ph: 8138901281

TAMIL

ALLIANCE INVITED for a Well–Educated, Professionally Settled Brahmin Iyengar (Vadakalai) Girl , 44 Currently in Australia. Short Marriage with No Issues. Cultured, Family–Oriented, Emotionally Mature, and Values Tradition Along with a Modern Outlook. Professionally Established, Independent, and Believes in Mutual Respect, Companionship, and Shared Values in Marriage.Seeking a Suitable Alliance From Groom Well–Educated, Professionally Settled Brahmin Iyengar, with Good Family Values and a Progressive Mindset. Serious and Genuine Inquiries Only.Email–goda108@zohomail.com.au

BRIDEGROOM WANTED

VELLALAR PILLAI, Doctor (MBBS) Bride, US Citizen, age 24, height 152 cm, Poosam, Kataka Rasi, currently preparing to join the Residency program in the US, is looking for suitable Doctor bridegroom preferably from VELLALA community living in the US.

Text to Whatsapp no: 94481 16931

EliteMatrimony

Personalized & Confidential Service for the Elites

ELITE BRIDES WANTED

KONGU VELLELA GOUNDER, 26, 183 cms, BE, Entrepreneur. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for an amiable match from similar caste. Contact: 6366448344

MUDALIYAR, 39, 178 cms, BE, Involved in Family Business. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for an amiable match from similar caste. Contact: 6366448344

VELLALAR, 26, 178 cms, PhD, Sr Data Scientist. Lives in Chennai. Looking for a like minded match from similar community from Tamil Nadu and Bangalore. Contact: 6366448343

MUTHURAJA NAIDU, 29, 178 cms, MBBS, Doctor. Lives in Chennai. Family is financially well off. Looking for a suitable match from any Naidu from India. Contact: 6366448343

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

PILLAI, 24, 152 cms, MBA, HR. Lives in Coimbatore. Father is a working professional. Looking for a suitable match from similar or equivalent community from Kongu Region. Contact: 6366448343

MUSLIM SUNNI, 24, 171 cms, MSc in Finance & Investment. Lives in UK. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for a suitable match with mother tongue Malayalam from UK, Europe, South India. Contact: 6366448343

TAMIL, 27, 165 cms, M.Arch, Involved in Family Business. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match from family in Chennai. Contact: 6366448344

MUDALIYAR, 28, 163 cms, MBA, Working Professional. Lives in Chennai. Parents are retired from govt sector. Looking for a like minded match from equivalent community. Contact: 6366448344

Largest Pool of True Elite Profiles | Dedicated & Experienced Relationship Managers | Most Successful Elite Service | Pioneer of Elite Matrimony Service in India

www.elitematrimony.com | Call for Free Consultation ✆ 99629 76000

TAMIL

GROOM WANTED Rich Mudaliyar, 32yrs, B.Tech, MBA,Working in Bangalore, Elite business family: 9962791888

GROOM WANTED Cast No Bar 27 years, MBBS, MD, Well Educated Family in Chennai Contact: 6385293227

E.NITHYA (30yrs) B.Tech(Chemical Engg) seeks groom from Class 1 officer of Central / State Government from SC/ST community(Hindu).9969228297

PILLAI 25Yrs/157cm Pooja Fair BE Hospital Mgt Canada seeks grooms any Country.9894107825, 9500595339

SEEKING PROFESSIONAL for 44yr SC Adidravida unmarried IT Professional from Chennai holding Singapore PR. Cont–nimmi1952@gmail.com/+91720 0942776/+91 9790921761

Vanniar, MSC MPhil PhD 43yrs Punarpoosam Prof HOD seeks groom from same community. 90032 43056

FAIR HINDU Mudaliyar Doctor 30/165, 75 Kg, working in NHS, UK. Seeks groom from Hindu Doctors either in UK or those willing to relocate / CNB / Contact : 87784 23359.

SC 43 Physiotherapist First Marriage CNB Coimbatore seeks Groom CT: Whatsapp: 9489176568

MUDALIAR 24/167 Fair Beautiful, BE, SWE, CTS,1000000.PA, Well Settled Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

GROOM WANTED Naidu, 31yrs, M.Tech, Industries with commercial complex in Chennai Ph: 6385293227

IYER BRAHMIN, Vadamal Athreya, 32 years / 155 Cms V.Fair B.Tech Trivandrum currently working in Canada. Girl seeks 0-4 years diff., professionally qualified Teetotaller well placed groom in India or Abroad from the same caste Contact : +919400973750.

HINDU, 23, Pillai, M.Sc, Upper Middle class,30 lakhs. Ph: 8138900553

GROOM WANTED Hindu Nadar 31yrs MBBS, MS, Elite business family Ph:9841329471 / 9380791999

GROOM WANTED Rich Mudaliyar, 24yrs,B.Tech, Own promoters in Chennai Ph:6385293227

TAMIL

GROOM WANTED

WELL EDUCATED HINDU MUDALIAR 28, MS(USA), GOOD LOOKING, OWN BUSINESS IN CHENNAI.

Seeking Decent, Financially Strong Groom with good Education & Family Background. No Dhosham.

Respond with Horoscope / Details (with your Phone / Email) to:

Ph: 9444037707

MD(S) 30 Divorcee Short Lived for A month Fair Slim Seeks never Married/ Divorcee CNB below 35. 9884318582

ROMAN CATHOLIC Nadar, 23 / 167, B.Arch, Working as Junior Nodular Designer in Coimbatore Salary Rs 300000 PA, O Negative Blood Group, Native of Kanyakumari District, presently settled in Tiruchirapalli, Seeks suitable Boy. Contact : 94421 62159.

MUDALIAR REMARRIAGE 36/163cm Bcom Chennai seeks professional groom chennai 9884858014

TELUGU

GROOM WANTED Kamma Naidu, 28yrs, B.Tech, MBA, Rich and Affluent family in Chennai. Contact: 6385293227

GAVARA NAIDU, 23/Fair, M.Sc.,B.Ed., Business family, running school, seeks well educated any profession or business groom. Contact : 94434 65588.

NAIDU 24/165, Fair, Beautiful, BE, SWE, TCS, 1000000.PA, Well Settled Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

URDU

SUNNI MUSLIM girl, 1994 born, 164 cm, B.Tech, never married, working in PSU Bank, Mumbai. Well–educated family from UP; father retired Addl. Director.Seeks suitable match. #9461179587

SMU 32/167 bride MBBS MD, Chennai seeks Doctor/Engineer groom from good family. Whatsapp/Ct:9585547701

BRIDES WANTED

HINDI

BRIDE WANTED

Age: 37 / 5'2" highly educated BE / MBA, Agarwal, well settled in Chennai, Affluent Family.

Renal Transplanted, Living normal life on Medication.

Suitable educated girl including divorcee without Kid may respond to

Whatsapp No. 98410 60505

No Broker Please

COSMOPOLITAN

BRIDE WANTED Alliance invited from Senior IAS Officer (R) for his Son Sept 1993 born, 178cm, MBA Finance, Premier B School. working in Oil PSU, Mumbai. likely to move to Bangalore. Maharashtrian/ Tamil Parents, Settled in Chennai. Expectation–professionally qualified girl Caste/ Language NO BAR Whatsapp 7305236868

DOCTOR

MD DOCTOR/ Elite /25 years/Vellalar /Fair /Good looking seeks PG doctors/well settled professionals CNB WhatsApp 9500163683

HINDI

1985/175CM, 50 Lakhs PA, Never Married, Bangalore. WhatsApp: 96290 12248

MALAYALAM

MALAYALEE NAIR, 31 years, IT professional, well-educated and well-settled in Trichy, seeks a suitable bride from Coimbatore / Trichy / Madurai. Well-mannered and family-oriented background preferred. Contact: 98430 59929

KHATRIYA HINDU boy, age 30, Bank officer, Mumbai seeks alliance from Veg family. 9388630720, 9495819425

PUNJABI

SEEKING ALLIANCE for Punjabi Boy, Chennai, 33 years, working as HR in UAE. Please Call : 98404 25490

TAMIL

AGE 48, 2nd Marriage, Working in Hospital at Qatar. Suitable Bride who willing to come Qatar. Ct: +97433840227 / 9498328263

AGAMUDAIYAR, UTHIRAM/KANNI 36/180, BE, HRM, Job at Canada, Canadian Citizen. He will be in India March, April'2026, seeks BE,Nursing, any degree bride.CNB. Ct:9442993042

AGAMUDAIYAR UTHIRADAM 35/180 B.Tech, TCS, Hyderabad, 2Lpm, seeks Equally Qualified bride, Caste No Bar. Contact:8220984182

40 BE Mudaliyar Chennai Asst Manager, Private. 1St Marriage. Decent Background Ct: 8610518808, 9952010118

HINDU VANNIYAR 37 years MBA, LLB, builders, MITHUNAM-THIRUVATHIRAI Well qualifide bride TINDIVANAM Ct: 9884637555

NAIDU MAY 2000 born, MBBS MD, Star Visakam, Rasi Thulam Groom seeks MBBS, MD (Clinial or Non clinical studying) BE, MDS Bride. Ct: 94430 50715 / 94879 00758

HINDU NADAR, 25yrs, MBBS, MS, Elite business family, Seeks Suitable Bride Contact: 9841329471/ 9380791999

BRIDE WANTED Mudaliyar 31yrs, B.Tech, Promoters with Own construction, Elite Family in Chennai 6385293227

SC AD 29, M.Tech, Software Engineer working in MNC Chennai seeks suitable employed Bride. Ct: 8939177665

TAMIL, PURE Vegetarian, 47 State Govt Officer –12L PA. First Marriage. Seek Caste no Bar only Vegetarian. Call/WA – 89037 47433

HINDU, 30, Business, MBM, Elite. PH:8138009235

HINDU, 26, Royale, anycaste, business. PH:9072777811

HINDU, YADAV, MD, Doctor, 30 lakhs. PH:9048444858

KARKATHA VELLALAR 27/182 cm, B.Tech Avittam Managing Director of a high–growth business. Pure Vegetarian, Teetotaler. Seeking a well–educated, family–oriented girl from a respectable family. WhatsApp only. 9363905354

PILLAI 34 M.Tech Wkg MNC Blr Seeks BrideGood Looking & Working. 30–32yrs,CNB. Ct: 9884104533/ 9840863620

WELL Settled Tamil based Intercaste (SC+Brahmin) Dr Couple, looking for suitable Bride for their Son 32 Yrs (Ragu-Kethu) Dr MD Pathology KMCH, Cbe. Mob: 9842221324, 9894186469.

MUDHALIYAR, CA,24L pa, Age–40, Never married, Kettai, Own House, 6 Acre land, Sub Caste ok. 9677622641 / 9962294842

SUPER SPECIALITY Doctor, affluent family, never married, Tamil speaking Muslim,34, 178cm working abroad. Looking for suitable bride. Whatsapp 918870279396

COSMOPOLITAN

KARKATHAR PILLAI 37, 170 cm, fair and handsome, BE (Telecom), Officer Indian Army IT Branch, 30 lacs PA, never married, son of retd army officer looking for affable and well educated girl. Equal and sub caste no bar. 9448307862.

✔ **ROMAN CATHOLIC/31 yrs/181 cms/ BE (Mech),MS (Product Design)/ PR Sweden. Inviting proposals from professionally qualified girls with a similar background, aged 26–29 yrs. Please email at sjm.val7@gmail.com or contact at 6381070174.**

EDUCATED BRIDE –35 for Groom RC, Software Engineer,43, Chennai,5ft 8inches /72Kg Never Married, Handsome, Teetotaler Ct.9841293931 antonbr144@gmail.com

SMART, CHRISTIAN 31, 180cm, enterprising, UK–educated professional. Seeks compatible bride. Religion/ community no bar. Call/WA 9345 634 365

US–RETURNED MS(USA) 33/6ft. FC Reddiar (CNB). Handsome Sr. Manager, Global MNC, Chennai. Well–settled, rooted in values. Divorced (legally closed). PARENTS INVITE PROPOSALS. WhatsApp biodata+ pics: 86374–66522

MS, PHD (USA) working in Florida (USA) 180cm, 32 Years Smart, Fair, Thiyya Community seeks USA based compatible bride. Community, Language no bar. Call 9343343888 / WA 9880088333 – Email: deeceecon@yahoo.co.in

DIVORCEE

DIVORCE 43, Hindu Govt Gazetted officer, seeks suitable educated bride caste no bar Ct: 63808 39406

SMART, SUCCESSFUL 38, 171cm, progressive US–based professional at global MNC. Seeks educated, compatible S Indian bride. Call/WA 93456 34365

DOCTOR

DOCTOR MS Surgeon, RC Catholic Nadar, 32, Divorcee, No children, Tirunelveli seeking Doctor alliance. 9488104192

CHRISTIAN NADAR Age 29,MBBS, TNML, MD General Medicine Ongoing Seeks a suitable Lady Doctor. 73586 38363

TAMIL

CHRISTIAN NADAR, Doctor, Divorcee 37yrs/178cm, MBBS, Dip in Cardiology better earning lives in Nagercoil seeks qualified/ Divorced Bride. 9003983230

RC 28YRS Er Graduate, MNC, decent salary from Business family. Seeks bride from decent family community no bar details to: dalsingroup@gmail.com / 9840239597

RC CHRISTIAN, 43yrs/170, B.E. Software Engineer, never married, works for mnc, Chennai. CT–9500188067

VANNIYAR, B.SC MBA, 45, Ayilyam, Employed , Brides from same community needed. Ct 9840961251 / 9840708702

SEEKING TAMIL Hindu BRIDE for our son, March 1990/173cm, MTech(IIT), MS(US), working in US. Parents intercaste Thevar and Iyengar, Caste No Bar. 96008 65587, sivampankajam@gmail.com

✔ **VANNIYAR, 27 Yrs, M.Tech(IISc) Thiruvathirai , Working in Taiwan. Educated family, looking for suitable bride, willing to relocate to Taiwan, CNB, Contact 7358 600 399 (319)**

HINDU-TAMIL- BE / SWE / 34yrs / 172CMS / 33LPA / Ayillam -Kadagam . Well educated and settled in Bangalore, financially stable. Looking for suitable Bride from educated family. Contact No: 9845401461.

LOOKING FOR bride, My Son earns 15L PA aged 39 H 168cm. Two own house in chennai. mob 9697750005.

MUDALIAR, NOV 1991, 172 cm, M.S PhD (IIT Madras), PDF(UK), Asst. Prof (Vellore), 18 LPA, Educated bride, CNB, 6383617937(w), vjk.iitm@gmail.com

BRIDE WANTED Hindu Nadar 30yrs, B.tech, MBA,SWE, 3Lac p/m Elite business family Ct:9841329471/ 9380791999

PILLAI 44 Divorcee M.Com Central Govt service Rs.13.50 lakhs PA seeks bride caste no bar 9094020665

Mudaliyar 54/170 unmarried B.Com Manager- Pvt concern 50K seeks well settled bride. CNB. Ph: 93602 97552

PILLAI, SOZHIA Vellalar 41yrs MBA, Manager, Pvt. 6 Lpa Divorcee, Seeks suitable bride, CNB. Ct: 9952362396

B.TECH FAIR telugu brahmin 1983 born / 183 cm Singapore MN bank seeks telugu / tamil brahmin girls, graduates /proff slim below 35Y primarly willing to relocate. Contact: 98401 08553 (Parents).

MUDALIAR 28/182 Handsome, BE, MBA, SWE, Infosys, 2400000.PA, Afflunet Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

MUDALIAR /BRAHMIN 28 Bcom MA 175cm chennai seeks slim graduate pillai, Brahmin ok : Geetham 9884858014

MUDALIAR/ PILLAI, DOB:29.05.93/ 183cm, Pooram/Simmam,BE,MS (USA)N. Veg,Working inUSA,Seeks suitable bride (25–31yr)Studying/Workingin USA/INDIA Caste no bar Mother:9003713942

TAMIL

SEEKING BRIDE

Alliance Invited - Vellalar Groom (35) Australian PR holder from a reputed business family in Tamilnadu. Financially secure, well-mannered, and family-oriented. Divorced. Looking for a compatible bride from Vellalar or similar community. Serious enquiries only.

Contact:
9965101234
csknetherlands@gmail.com

Seeking BRIDE for Bridegroom

Hindu, Kulalar/Udayaar, 44 yrs, 170 cms, M.Tech, IT professional, Caste open for discussion. First Marriage Only

CT: 93842 76066

AUDITOR/ 46 Chennai/ Seeks Any Vegetarian Hindu Girl. Contact : 9884398109

HINDU, 36, divorced, any caste, Doctor, 30 lakhs. Ph: 8138900316

HINDU, NAIDU, 29, MS, USA, 20 crores. Ph: 8138901281

HINDU, NADAR, MBM, 10 crores, UK. Ph: 8137003550

HINDU, 28, Yadav, Doctor, 40 lakhs. Ph: 9072777811

DKV 2nd Marriage 53 / 3.5 LPM Sr. GM B'lore Seeks Issueless Girl CNB 9442607143.

DKV Divorcee 44 / 1.5 LPM DGM PSU Son with Mother Seeks Issueless Girl CNB 8903778148.

37Y B.Com Pooram Rs 3 lakhs per month seeks any graduate bride. No brokers. 96291 95475 / 044- 28444665

Canadian RC (39), Divorced, Tall 188 cm, Handsome, Employed. Seeks PR/Canadian Citizen Bride. Phone: 9442582777

Mudaliyar 33, 174 cms, Engineer Employee @ Hyderabad. Family is well off. Looking for a suitable Bride from a well settled Family. Caste no bar. Contact - 98845 13749

TELUGU

NAIDU 28 Fair 174 MCA Business 12L PA seeks Qualified Co working Business minded Life Partner. 9444523941

NAIDU 27/180, Handsome, BE, SWE, ZOHO, 2000000 PA, Afflunet Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

MARRIAGE BUREAU

US UK Canada All Caste Religion 1st Marriage Remarriage. Ct:8248757840

AUTOMOBILE

FOUR WHEELERS

SELLING

TOYOTA

TOYOTA-INNOVA 2010 Model for Sale – 2.5V (M4) VX, 8-Seater, Single Owner, 3.2L Kms, Well Maintained, FC & Insurance Valid. Location: Girinagar, Bengaluru. Contact: Sumanth Narayan: 9606353036

SITUATIONS VACANT

MARKETING

HIRING SALES Managers- fixed Salary of 7L+ For Top Insurance Agency + Unlimited Incentives. 9901862144

Required Export Manager Independantly Exporting Granite and Quartz Slabs. Excellent Salary with Incentives. Extensive Foreign Travel. Email: granitequartz4@gmail.com

TECHNICAL

MICRO LAB, Guntur is Hiring experienced Microbiologist and Microbiology technician. Work location Guntur AP. Cont. 9441356804 Salary–Negotiable

BUSINESS OFFERS

BUSINESS

INVESTOR/PARTNER REQ 20Language OTT&Film Distribution Proj. 8148188460

GENERAL

ASTROLOGY

CALL @ 7550246567 for Best Solutions for Business, Income, Marriage, Health by Astrology.

DETECTIVE

PRE-MATRIMONIAL VERIFICATION SERVICES

Faster. Better. Cheaper. Identity, Education & Employment Verification Background, Financial & Residential Checks Log on to: prematrimonial verification.com Call: +91 9246818526

POWERED BY Veri Once Blockchain

Vivenns Global Private Ltd
My Home Hub, Madhapur, Hyd- 81

Kalaburagi at bottom of income ladder as Kalyana Karnataka trails State economy

Kumar Buradikatti
KALABURAGI

While Karnataka cements its position as India's growth engine with the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) increasing from ₹29.06 lakh crore in 2024-25 to ₹32.81 lakh crore in 2025-26, the latest Economic Survey for 2025-26 reveals a stark and widening regional disparity.

Kalaburagi district and Kalyana Karnataka region (Kalaburagi Revenue Division) continue to remain at the bottom of Karnataka's income ladder.

According to the Karnataka Economic Survey 2025-26, Kalaburagi occupied the last rung in per capita income (PCI) grid in the State with ₹1,44,449 in 2024-25, falling from ₹1,45,377 in 2023-24, a negative growth of minus ₹928. The State average PCI is ₹3,86,156.

The performance of other Kalyana Karnataka districts is also not impressive. Of the bottom eight districts, six are from the region - Yadgir (₹1,64,388), Raichur (₹1,78,888), Koppal (₹1,81,152), Bidar (₹1,85,079) and Vijayanagara (₹1,93,230), apart from Kalaburagi at the bottommost rung. The other two are Belagavi (₹1,83,217) and Vijayapura (₹1,87,429). Only Ballari managed to perform better, occupying the 11th rung with ₹3,24,111.

Disparity

In contrast, Bengaluru Urban district, which leads the State economy, recorded a PCI of ₹8,55,960, nearly six times that of Kalaburagi.

The headquarters of the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board in Kalaburagi. The clustering of Kalyana Karnataka districts at the lower end of the income ladder underscores the persistent regional imbalance within Karnataka's economy. FILE PHOTO

Dakshina Kannada (₹6,26,279), Udupi (₹6,00,683), Chikkamagaluru (₹4,94,787) and Shivamogga (₹3,89,743) also remain far ahead in income levels. While Bengaluru increased its PCI by ₹89,198 compared to 2023-24, other top-performing districts also increased their PCI significantly in the same year - Dakshina Kannada (₹58,735), Udupi (₹56,492), Chikkamagalur (₹42,647) and Shivamogga (₹30,079).

In contrast, the growth of PCI in Kalyana Karnataka districts are meagre – Yadgir (₹15,287), Raichur (₹8,403), Koppal (₹17,834), and Bidar (₹13,711) and Vijayanagara (₹20,814). Belagavi (₹20,414) and Vijayapura (₹19,195) from Kittur Karnataka were among the bottom performers.

The worst performance is from the Kalaburagi district, which recorded a negative growth. Earlier also, in 2015-16 and 2020-21, the district recorded negative growth.

The clustering of a majority of Kalyana Karnataka districts at the lower end of the income ladder underscores the persistent regional imbalance within Karnataka's economy.

The disparity is also visible in the size of district economies measured through Gross District Domestic Product (GDDP). According to the survey, Kodagu recorded the smallest district economy in the State with a GDDP of ₹21,510 crore in 2024-25, followed by Yadgir (₹26,517 crore) and Gadag (₹28,603 crore). Koppal reported ₹33,020 crore, reflecting the limited scale of economic activity in several districts.

In contrast, economically stronger districts report far larger output levels. Bengaluru Urban alone recorded a GDDP of ₹11,73,574 crore, while Dakshina Kannada (₹1,54,509 crore) and Belagavi (₹1,11,225 crore) also reported significantly larger district economies. Together with other major districts such as Tumakuru (₹1,00,988 crore) and Mysuru (₹99,527 crore), these top five economic centres account for more than half of the State's total economic output, highlighting the concentration of economic activity in a few regions of Karnataka. Though GDDP alone is not necessarily a measure of development, as smaller districts naturally tend to record lower output while larger and more urbanised districts report higher economic size, it indicates a district's contribution to the GSDP.

State measures

The survey noted that the State government has attempted to address regional imbalance through policy initiatives aimed at decentralising economic activity beyond Bengaluru, including the Karnataka Startup Policy 2025-30, unveiled with an outlay of about ₹518.27 crore. The policy seeks to foster 25,000 new start-ups across the State. A key feature of the policy, the survey noted, is its emphasis on spatial decentralisation, with a target of nurturing at least 10,000 start-ups outside Bengaluru.

Pointing to structural issues, Sangeeta Kattimani, member of the State Policy and Planning Commission, Karnataka, said, "With limited industrialisation, a poorly developed service sector and largely untapped tourism potential, north Karnataka remains heavily dependent on agriculture. The dry weather also contributes, as extreme heat affects the productivity across sectors."

'Menstrual leave policy at national level will be welcome'

The State has framed Karnataka Women Well Being Leave Bill, 2025, which is yet to be tabled in the legislature

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after the Supreme Court expressed apprehensions that a law making paid menstrual leave compulsory may damage the careers of young women and deprive them of equal opportunities, Karnataka Labour Minister Santosh Lad said that he had taken note of the observations made by the court on the matter, and batted for a national level policy on the matter after wide consultations.

Karnataka ushered in the Menstrual Leave Policy in November 2025 granting one-day menstrual leave a month for women.

Karnataka's Bill

Karnataka ushered in the Menstrual Leave Policy in November 2025, applicable to women aged between 18 and 52. The Government Order (GO) that followed granted one-day menstrual leave a month for women in the private sector and in government employment. To make the policy legally stronger, the Karnataka Women Well Being Leave Bill, 2025, was drafted. However, while the Bill is yet to be tabled in the Legislature, the GO has been questioned in the Karnataka High Court.

Mr. Lad, responding to the apex court observations on Saturday, said, "As the court has pointed out, granting four to five days of leave and implementing it through legislation may not be practically feasible. At the same time, it is encouraging that the court has appreciated the policy introduced by our State government, which provides one day of paid leave every month for women employees in both government and private institutions."

Extensive consultations

Mr. Lad noted that the State government had undertaken extensive consultations before introducing the policy and framing the Bill. According to him, discussions were held with a wide range of stakeholders, including experts, employers, industrialists, entrepreneurs, doctors and senior officials.

"After carefully examining the merits and challenges involved, we have brought in what we believe is an appropriate and balanced policy," Mr. Lad said.

The Minister further said, "If a suitable menstrual leave policy is formulated at the national level after gathering views from all concerned, and keeping the interests of women across the country in mind, it would certainly be welcome."

Six MPs urge Centre to include quota Act in Ninth Schedule

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

Six Members of Parliament have urged the Union government to include the Karnataka Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act, 2022, in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution to safeguard reservation benefits for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the State.

MPs from Karnataka submitting a memorandum to Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Virendra Kumar.

A delegation comprising G. Kumar Naik (Raichur), E. Tukaram (Ballari), Priyanka Satish Jarkiholi (Chikkodi), Rajashekhar Hitnal (Koppal), Prabha Mallikarjun (Davangere), and Sunil Bose (Chamarajanagar) met Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Virendra Kumar on March 11 to submit a memorandum seeking urgent action on the issue.

In the memorandum, the MPs expressed concern that the proposal sent by the government of Karnataka to include the Act in the Ninth Schedule has been pending with the Union government for more than three years.

The MPs said that inclusion of the legislation in the Ninth Schedule under Articles 31(B) and 31(C) of the Constitution is necessary to protect the reservation policy from legal challenges, and ensure effective implementation of enhanced reservation for SCs and STs communities in Karnataka.

They informed that the Act was brought in to advance the constitutional objectives under Articles 15, 16, 38, 39 and 46, which mandate the State to promote social justice, reduce inequalities and safeguard the educational and economic interests of weaker sections.

The memorandum recalled that the State government forwarded the proposal to the Union government in March, 2023, for inclusion of the Act in the Ninth Schedule. However, the matter is yet to be taken up for consideration.

The MPs said that the demand for enhanced reservation for SCs and STs in the State had persisted for decades.

They pointed out that significant changes had occurred in the classification and recognition of SC and ST communities since the 1960s. In particular, the enactment of Central Act 108 of 1976 removed geographical restrictions attached to many communities, thereby increasing the population eligible for reservation benefits. Despite this increase, the reservation quota in the State had remained unchanged since 1958, they said.

They referred to the recommendations of the H.N. Nagamohandas Commission which examined the socio-economic status and representation of SCs and STs communities based on extensive empirical data.

The findings were later reviewed by an implementation committee headed by Subhash B. Adi, based on which the State government enacted the legislation.

Objections on UKP: DKS, Ministers to meet MPs in Delhi

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

To deliberate on the objections raised by Andhra Pradesh on the Upper Krishna Project (UKP) and to prevail upon the Union government, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar along with other Ministers including H.K. Patil, M.B. Patil and N.S. Boseraju will be travelling to Delhi to meet members of Parliament from the State.

Speaking to presspersons in Bagalkot on Saturday, Mr. Shivakumar said that they would be proceeding to Delhi on Tuesday.

He said that Andhra Pradesh had written to the Centre objecting the land acquisition for UKP and the Centre had written to Karnataka seeking clarification. "We are going on with the project as per the Tribunal order and we have already spent ₹26,000 crore," he said. The Deputy Chief Minister clarified that the State government was in the process of preparations for making use of the allotted quota of water to the State as per the Tribunal's award in 2010.

Andhra Pradesh was also not cooperating on the issue of construction of balancing reservoir on Tungabadhra, he said.

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY
E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender No. 06/2025-26/SE/PPD/KCH
AMRUT-2.0-Kochi Corporation-Providing underground sewerage networks and allied works in the erstwhile Division 54 of Kochi Corporation for the newly proposed 5MLD STP at Elamkulam
Cost of Tender form : Rs. 19,518/- (inclusive of GST)
EMD : Rs. 5,00,000/-
Date and time of Opening Tender : 17/04/2026 3.30 pm
Last date of receipt of tender : 16/04/2026 3.00 pm
Phone : 8547638502 Sd/-
E-mail - seppdregionkochi@gmail.com Superintending Engineer

KARNATAKA FOREST DEPARTMENT
Office of The Deputy Conservator of Forests, Mysuru Division, Mysuru – 570008.
Ph:0821- 2483853, Email:dcfmdm@gmail.com
No.A3/Sandal Auction/CR-30/2025-26 Date:05.03.2026

BRIEF SALE NOTIFICATION

It is hereby notified for the general information of the public that the Sandalwood of different classification stored at **Government Sandalwood Depot, Aranya Bhavana, Mysuru – 570 008** As mentioned below will be sold by e-tender-cum-auction mode through the online platform **"www.mstcecommerce.com"**. The sale conducting authority is Deputy Conservator of Forests, Mysuru Division,Mysuru. The e-tender-cum auction is subject to terms and conditions uploaded on the website **www.mstcecommerce.com**.by e-tender-cum auction **Notice No: MSTC/BLR/Karnataka Forest Department / 1/Aranya Bhavana, Ashokapuram /25-26/66901 Date of e-tender-cum-auction:** 25th March 2026 **Mode:** Online-www.mstcecommerce.com **Time:** 11.00AM to 2.00PM. **Quantity of Material:** 48 Lots of Approximately **138.000 MT Sandal wood of** different kinds. **Approximate value**: Above Rs.1.50 Crores. **Inspection of logs by the bidders:** 12.03.2026 to 17.03.2026(Both dates inclusive) 10:30 AM and 04:30 PM **(**On working Days) at Government Sandalwood Depot,Aranya Bhavana, Mysuru– 570008. **Pre Bid Meeting: 17th March 2026** at 4.00pm at the office of The Deputy Conservators of Forests, Mysuru Division, Mysuru. **Conditions: 1)** Interested bidders should get themselves Registered with MSTC well in advance. **2)** Intended bidders are advised to inspect the material to their satisfaction. **3)** The Quantity notified for each lot in each class kept for sale is approximate. Right to vary this quantity of each lot or number of lots is reserved to below signed. **4)** Every Registered bidders shall pay an **Earnest money deposit (EMD) of Rs.1,00,000/- (One Lakh only)** for all lots/or any lot. **5)** The black listed bidders, defaulters, Minors, insolvent persons will not bePermitted to participate in the sale. **6)** Detailed Sale Conditions to be downloaded from www.mstcecommerce.com.

Sd/- Deputy Conservator of Forests, Mysuru Division, Mysuru.
DIPR/DDMYS/1820/KSMCA/1028/2025-26

Single window panel clears projects worth ₹4,824 crore

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State-Level Single Window Clearance Committee (SLSWCC) has approved investments worth ₹4,824.31 crore in Karnataka on Saturday.

Industries Minister M. B. Patil during the 158th State Level Single Window Approval Committee Meeting on Saturday.

These investments, cleared at the 158th meeting of SLSWCC, came from 37 industries and would cover 13 districts, including Vijayapura, Bagalkot, Chitradurga, Kolar, and Ramanagara.

"These approved projects, across sectors such as IT infrastructure, sugar manufacturing, technical textiles, compressed biogas, aerospace, jewellery production, electronics, software, and five-star hotel construction will create 14,525 new jobs in the State," anticipated M.B. Patil, Minister for Large and Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development.

Some of the major projects received approval include IT infrastructure development project by Bagmane Constructions Private Limited worth ₹494.65 crore, sugar factory investment of ₹443.50 crore by Karnataka Bangaru Sugars, Kleine Pax's technical textile unit worth ₹376 crore, a ₹300 crore worth star project by Trishul Buildtech and Infrastructure and Tsuyo Manufacturing's Electric vehicle motor and controller manufacturing unit worth ₹250 crore.

According to a media communique, 22 large and medium industrial projects totaling upto ₹3,908.68 crore are expected to generate employment for 12,475 people. Some 15 new projects with investments totaling ₹350.60 crore will create 1,750 jobs. While, two additional investment projects amounting to ₹565.03 crore is expected to create another 300 jobs in the State.

Principal Secretary Commerce and Industry Department N. Selvakumar, Industrial Development Commissioner Gunjan Krishna and Managing Director, Karnataka Udyog Mitra, Dodda Basavaraju participated in the meeting.

aavin THE TAMIL NADU COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED,
AAVIN ILLAM, 3-A, CHAMIERS ROAD, NANDANAM, CHENNAI-600035,
. TELEPHONE: 044-23464500 E-MAIL: DGMCIVILAAVINHO@GMAIL.COM
Ref. No: 2944/Engg.2/2026 **NOTICE INVITING TENDER (e-Submission Only)** Dated: 13.03.2026
The TCMPF Ltd invites **TWO PART TENDER** by way of e-submission through e-Procurement Portal from the registered civil contractors.

Sl. No.	Name of the works	EMD Amount	Tender Document Availability: 20.03.2026 to 21.04.2026 upto 3.00 PM
1.	Additional Civil works to the Construction of 10 LLPD Dairy Plant at Madavaram	Rs.11,15,000/-	Pre Bid Meeting : 26.03.2026 at 3.00 PM E-Submission End Date and Time : 21.04.2026 at 3.00 PM Technical Bid opening Date and Time : 22.04.2026 at 3.00 PM
2.	Office Rental space of 400 sq.ft. on the 3rd floor and 1621 sq.ft. on the 6th floor are available at **Aavin Illam Building, Chamiers Road, Nandanam. Rent : Rs.60 per sq.ft.**		

The Technical Bids shall be opened through online e-Procurement Portal **(https://tntenders.gov.in)** on above date at above mentioned address.

DIPR/ 1792 /TENDER/2026
Deputy General Manager (Civil),
Tamil Nadu Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರಕಾರ
(ಮೂಲಸೌಲಭ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ, ಬಂದರು ಮತ್ತು ಒಳನಾಡು ಜಲಸಾರಿಗೆ ಇಲಾಖೆ)
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಜಲಸಾರಿಗೆ ಮಂಡಳಿ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಬಂದರು ಮತ್ತು ಮೀನುಗಾರಿಕಾ ವಿಭಾಗ
'ಶ್ಯಾಮಿಲಿ ಹಾಲ್', 2ನೇ ಮಹಡಿ, ಅಂಬಲಪಾಡಿ, ಉಡುಪಿ–576103.
Tel No.: 0820–2532961, E-mail: pfdudupi@gmail.com

ಸಂ:ಕಾನಿಇಂ:ಬಂಮೀವಿ:ಉಡುಪಿ:ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ:30/2025–26 ದಿ: 12.03.2026

ಮರುಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಎರಡನೇ ಕರೆ)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ಬಂದರು ಮತ್ತು ಮೀನುಗಾರಿಕಾ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಉಡುಪಿ ಇವರ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕ ಮೊಹರಾದ ಟೆಂಡರುಗಳನ್ನು ಮ್ಯಾನುವಲ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ **"Construction of multipurpose Fisheries centre for local Fishermen at Kodavooru in Malpe, Udupi Taluk & District (ಟೆಂಡರಿಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 105.94 ಲಕ್ಷ), Construction of multipurpose Fisheries Centre for local Fishermen at Uppunda Madikal, Byndoor Taluk & District (ಟೆಂಡರಿಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 109.73 ಲಕ್ಷ)"** ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ಎರಡನೇ ಕರೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದ್ದು www.kppp.karnataka.gov.inನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆದು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಲ್ಗೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರಿನ ಅವಧಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆಯ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟೀಕರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿ: 20.03.2026ರಂದು 17.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಮತ್ತು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪಡೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳೆ ದಿ: 23.03.2026ರಂದು 17.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮುಂದೂಡಿಕೆಯ ಕುರಿತು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗಿ ದಿನಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

ತಮ್ಮ ವಿಶ್ವಾಸಿ,
ಸಹಿ/–, ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್
ಬಂದರು ಮತ್ತು ಮೀನುಗಾರಿಕಾ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಉಡುಪಿ

Vairamuthu becomes third Tamil writer to get Jnanpith Award

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Vairamuthu

Lyricist and author Vairamuthu has been selected for the Jnanpith Award, the nation's highest literary honour. He is the third Tamil literary figure to receive the award, after a gap of 24 years. He won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2003 for *Kallikattu Ithikasam*.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin congratulated Mr. Vairamuthu on Saturday, saying that the award had so far been won only by Akilan and Jayakanthan, and that Vairamuthu, who has excelled in both classical and modern verse, has now joined them. Mr. Stalin said he met Mr. Vairamuthu on Saturday morning and was talking to him before the news arrived. "Moments later, this sweet news arrived, doubling the delight of that meeting," he said.

Mr. Vairamuthu said the Jnanpith was greater than the greatest in literature; for Tamil, it was rarer than the rarest. "I am deeply pleased to receive the Jnanpith Award, which the world of letters regards as the Nobel Prize of Indian literature... The long-standing remark that Tamil poetry had never received the Jnanpith ends with me," he said.

Kerala govt. softens stand on women's entry at Sabarimala

State govt. urges the court to assess if age-old restrictions are genuinely and conscientiously held; the move comes ahead of a nine-judge Bench hearing review petitions against the 2018 judgment

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Kerala government's submission on entry of women into the shrine comes as the State prepares for the Assembly polls. PTI

The poll-bound State of Kerala, home to the famed Sabarimala temple, delicately moderated an earlier cast-iron stance in the Supreme Court in favour of the entry of women of menstrual age into the shrine.

The State government, in written submissions filed before the Supreme Court on Saturday, said a judicial review of whether the age-old restriction on entry for women between menarche and menopause was an essential religious practice must not be guided by either reason or sentiment alone.

The State said the court must instead carry out a careful assessment to determine whether the belief that women of that age group should not appear before Lord Ayyappa in the celibate or *Naishtika Brahmachari* form, was "genuinely and conscientiously" held.

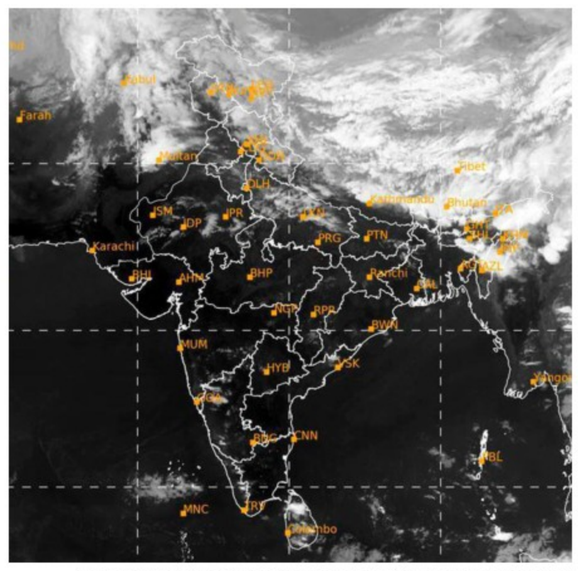
"Any judicial review into any religious practice followed for so many years connected with the belief and values accepted by the people must be after wide consultation with and after soliciting views of eminent religious scholars and reputed social reformers of that religion. A decision in this regard should be rendered by the court after assessing the opinions of social reformers and religious scholars as an impartial authority," the State, represented by senior advocate Jaideep Gupta and advocate Nishe Rajen Shonker, submitted.

In a rather cryptic one-liner, the State ventured to remind the court that "previous experience in the matter of Sabarimala shrine" and the "response of devotees, including women devotees", would support the government's current stand.

The State government's filings come days before a Bench is scheduled from April 7, 2026, to hear review petitions against the 2018 judgment.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. Thunderstorm with hailstorm/lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Sikkim, West Bengal, Odisha, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	40	32.4	21.7	Kozhikode	—	35.0	27.3
Ahmedabad	—	38.0	22.9	Kurnool	—	39.0	24.2
Aizawl	3.4	29.9	16.6	Lucknow	—	34.4	18.5
Allahabad	—	36.4	18.5	Madurai	—	38.0	23.7
Bengaluru	—	33.2	21.1	Mangaluru	—	33.6	25.1
Bhopal	—	37.2	17.8	Mumbai	—	35.0	23.3
Bhubaneswar	—	33.2	25.1	Mysuru	—	34.0	17.8
Chandigarh	—	30.1	15.6	New Delhi	—	33.2	18.1
Chennai	—	34.6	24.0	Patna	—	34.4	22.2
Coimbatore	—	35.2	22.4	Port Blair	—	31.2	27.5
Dehradun	—	31.3	16.3	Puducherry	—	32.8	24.0
Gangtok	22	16.8	12.7	Pune	—	39.3	22.4
Goa	—	33.7	25.8	Raipur	—	39.0	22.6
Guwahati	24	24.0	19.3	Ranchi	—	35.4	17.0
Hubballi	—	37.0	20.0	Shillong	8	21.6	12.5
Hyderabad	—	37.6	22.9	Shimla	—	22.7	12.0
Imphal	—	24.7	14.7	Srinagar	—	19.4	4.4
Jaipur	—	33.8	20.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.5	24.4
Kochi	—	32.0	26.8	Tiruchi	—	36.5	23.6
Kohima	—	21.0	13.0	Vijayawada	—	34.9	23.4
Kolkata	—	33.6	25.6	Visakhapatnam	—	31.5	25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	106	62	72	182	242	
Bengaluru	4	21	38	226	193	
Chennai	6	13	51	30	56	
Delhi	14	124	42	110	222	
Hyderabad	3	10	42	93	115	
Kolkata	7	37	33	67	73	
Lucknow	9	32	55	211	122	
Mumbai	19	89	3	84	120	
Pune	—	108	49	131	128	
Visakhapatnam	44	49	16	52	112	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Bileipada, Odisha recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 379 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 28

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

HC upholds KPTCL regulation entrusting departmental inquiries to Lokayukta

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A Division Bench of the Karnataka High Court has set aside the single judge's verdict, which had declared as unconstitutional the regulation of the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. (KPTCL) that entrusted departmental inquiries against a delinquent employee to the inquiry wing of the Lokayukta after the corruption case was investigated by the police wing of the Lokayukta.

The Division Bench, comprising Justice D.K. Singh and Justice S. Rachaiah, passed the order while allowing the appeals filed by the Registrar of the Karnataka Lokyukta challenging the single judge's October 16, 2024, judgment, which had declared Regulation 14-A of the Karnataka Electricity Board (KEB) Conduct, Discipline and Appeal Regulations, as unconstitutional with prospective effect.

The single judge had held that conduct of both the investigation and the departmental inquiry by the officers of the Lokayukta amounts to "inevitable bias" against the employee and offends Article 14 of the Constitution of India.

Also, the single Judge had prohibited the KPTCL and the Electricity Supply Companies (Escoms) from assigning departmental inquiries to the Lokayukta in the matters probed by it under the Lokayukta Act or the Prevention of Corruption Act (PC Act).

Contrary

However, the Bench found that the single Judge's finding was contrary to the observations made in the 2016 judgment of a Division Bench, which had upheld Rule 14-A of the Karnataka Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1957, which the KEB regulations adopted. Pointing out that the investigation wing led by the senior police officers and the inquiry wing led by the judicial officers, though come under the administrative control of the Lokayukta, are separate and they discharge their duties independently, the Bench said that "there is no real danger of bias as held by the single judge".

Incorrect reading

The Bench also said that single judge's observation that "the Lokayukta and Upalokayukta should not play the dual role of prosecutor as well as enquirer," was "a result of incorrect reading' of the provisions of the Lokayukta Act."

Suspect in gang leader murder case hacked to death in Kerala

The Hindu Bureau
KOLLAM

In a brazen act of gang rivalry, a notorious gang leader and prime suspect in a murder case was hacked to death in broad daylight on Saturday near Karunagappally, Kerala. The victim, 30-year-old Atul (known as Aluva Atul) from Oachira, was attacked on a busy stretch of National Highway while returning from the Karunagappally Police Station. Atul had recently been released on bail and was required to report to the station as part of his bail conditions.

According to police, Atul was travelling with a companion when they were intercepted by a four-member gang.

They chased Atul's car as he was heading toward Oachira. They rammed his car into a ditch dug for highway construction, smashed the windows, dragged him out, and attacked him.

Atul was rushed to the hospital, but he died of injuries.

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
OPEN TENDER NOTICE
(Throughe e-Tender)

On the behalf of President of India e-Tenders are invited by the Sr. DMM/ DSD / NWR, Jodhpur. **E-tender Notice No:- 33256021, Date: 12.03.2026. Name of item**: Design, supply and installation of a Set of Stacking Arrangements and Accessories (Consists of 27 items) for Various Sections of BGKT Shed as per Annexure"A" and attached technical specifications. **Approximate Cost of items**: ₹ 11858764.00 (₹ One Core Eighteen Lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Four Rupees Only). **Earnest Money to be deposited**: ₹ 237180.00 (₹ Two Lack Thirty Seven Thousand One Hundred Eighty Rupees Only). **Last date and time for Submission of E-Tender Opening of E-Tender**: 09.04.2026, 14:25. **Web site from E-Tender forms can be obtained**: **www.ireps.gov.in Address of NIT issuing. Office**: Officer of the Sr.DMM/ DSD, NWR, Jodhpur-342001(Rajasthan). **Notice: 1.** Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be summarily rejected. **2.** Cost of tender document & EMD online through e-transfers i.e. through payment gateway facility. **3.** on the IREPS website.

363-AR/26

Follow us on : /NWRailways NWRailways_

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice No.: Prov_CGBD_5Line_2Line_sin, Dated: 09.03.2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Item of work	Approx. Value
South Western Railway - Bengaluru (SBC) Division: Provision of CGDB at Carmelaram, Yelahanka and 5 Line, 2 Line & Single Line, Double Face Display Board arrangements at Bengaluru Cantonment, Yelahanka, Karajagi, Krishnarajapuram, KSR Bengaluru, Bangarapet, Mandya, Tumakuru, Kuppam, Hindupur, Channapatna, Hosur, Malur, Ramanagaram, Sri Sathya Sai Prasanthi Nilayam & Whitefield and Doddaballapur, Dharmapuri Station over Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 9,93,54,857.34

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 31.03.2026**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/Bengaluru

PUB/988/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
CIVIL ENGINEERING KOTA DIVISION
TENDER NOTICE No- W/623/15, Date- 13/3/2026.

Sr. Divisional Engineer (Coordination), West Central Railway, Kota for and on behalf President of Under of india Invites following open E tenders., **Tender No.-** 42/2026, **Description of Work-** Kota Division: Improvement of WCR colony staff quarters, pathway, parking facilities and other miscellaneous works at TKD., **Approx cost-** 10048817.50/-, **Earnest Money-** 200300.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 01/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 43/2026, **Description of Work-** (I)Kota Division: Repair and maintenance of hand pumps at various location in the Jurisdiction of Sr. DEN N section., (ii) Repairs to way side station staging of water tanks at DUM, SWAR, PNGR (Capacity 00.5 Lakh lakx ltre RCC OH Tank)., **Approx cost-** 9053883.43/-, **Earnest Money-** 181100.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 01/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 44/2026, **Description of Work-** Kota Division: Extention of existing protective screen of various ROBs in entire Kota Division (Total= 33 Nos)., **Approx cost-** 19376667.64/-, **Earnest Money-** 246900.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender-** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 01/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 45/2026, **Description of Work-** Kota-COR Section: Provision of Boundary wall to prevent encroachment on approaches of major cities at ADEN/C on Section., **Approx cost-** 20187226.77/-, **Earnest Money-** 250900.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender-** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 01/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 46/2026, **Description of Work-** Kota Division Repair and cleaning of drain manhole septik tank/dugwell & IC SSE/W/SWM section and well in MEZ river near LKE Station and rank vegetation SSE/W/SWM Section" for two years., **Approx cost-** 3554605.27/-, **Earnest Money-** 71100.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 01/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 47/2026, **Description of Work-** Kota-RTA Section: Provision of boundary wall to prevent encroachment on approaches of major cities at ADEN BAZ Section., **Approx cost-** 26927378.49/-, **Earnest Money-** 284600.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 01/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 48/2026R, **Description of Work-** (I) W/701/5/140 Improvement damaged water pipeline & provision of new RCC over head tank (Capacity 50000 ltr) at THEA, BNDI, SMPA & PSLI station. (ii) W/701/5/142 Improvement of water supply arrangement and construction of overhead water tank in LKE-MXL section., **Approx cost-** 32497229.54/-, **Earnest Money-** 312500.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 49/2026, **Description of Work-** Improvement of road at various colonies of station under ADEN GGC & ADEN BTE section., **Approx cost-** 23557128.87/-, **Earnest Money-** 267800.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 50/2026, **Description of Work-** Kota Division: Cleaning of Manhole, inspection chamber, dug well, septik tank and sewage line in Railway colony & ELS TKD at Tughlkabad for 3 years., **Approx cost-** 848667.77/-, **Earnest Money-** 17000.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 51/2026, **Description of Work-** Kota -Chittor Section- Construction of limited height subway (LHS) in lieu of LC No. 120 at km: 151/02-03 between BSSL-CNA Stations under ADEN-C-Kota., **Approx cost-** 29516981.29/-, **Earnest Money-** 297600.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 52/2026, **Description of Work-** Supply of 25000 Liters clean potable water per day at PNGR station in ADEN BTE jurisdiction (for 730 days)., **Approx cost-** 595680.00/-, **Earnest Money-** 11900.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 53/2026, **Description of Work-** Shamgarh-Supply of clean potable water per day in Railway colony at SGZ(120 days per year for 02 year), **Approx cost-** 2191248.00/-, **Earnest Money-** 43800.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 54/2026R, **Description of Work-** NAD-KOTA Section: Extension of barrel length of various bridges under the jurisdiction of ADEN-SGZ & ADEN/RMA. Br.No: 09/UP&DN, 20UP, 27UP, 35DN, 36DN, 42DN, 76/UP&DN etc. (ADEN-SGZ) & Br.No: 124/UP&DN, 125/UP&DN etc. (ADEN-RMA), **Approx cost-** 24824854.51/-, **Earnest Money-** 274100.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, **Tender No.-** 55/2026, **Description of Work-** Sr. DEN(S) Section- Welding of 60Kg - 52Kg 90UTS & R-260 rails in-situ with Single shot crucible fitted and supply of AT Weld in connection with portions various sanctioned Track works., **Approx cost-** 23865311.57/-, **Earnest Money-** 269300.00/-, **Last date & time of submission of tender -** 15:30 Hrs. On dt 07/04/2026, Complete details are available in the E- tender notice uploaded on the railway web site www.ireps.gov.in and also placed on the notice board of the Sr. Divisional Engineer (Coordination), DRM Office, West Central Railway Kota's office.

Sd./-
Sr. Divisional Engineer (Coordination), WCR, Kota

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Auction for leasing of Parcel Space, Parking & Advertising and Miscellaneous Contracts by Bengaluru Division

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites bidders for E-Auctions on the following Dates:

1. **Parking & Pay and Use:** 17.03.2026.
2. **Parcel:** 20.03.2026, 23.03.2026, 24.03.2026
3. **Miscellaneous:** 23.03.2026.

For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Bengaluru

PUB/996/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the kind notice of the General public that my Clients intends to purchase the schedule property from the present owners namely **Sri. V.G. RAJENDRA and Smt. V.R. ANURADHA**, and the said owners have hold that the schedule property is their Self acquired property having purchased the same from its previous owner Sri.B.N Shyamsundar vide Registered Sale Deed Dated 06-10-2025, Registered , at the office of the Sub-Registrar Vijaynagar.. Bangalore, as Document No. VJN-1-03255/2025-26, in Book-I, Stored in Centralized Electronic Cell. That they are enjoying the schedule property as its sole and absolute owners by getting Registered the Katha etc. in to their names and by paying Tax to the concerned authorities. Further, they declare that excepting themselves none else have any manner of Right, Title & Interest of what so ever over the schedule house property and the same is free from all sorts of Encumbrances, Claims. Lien and Litigation, etc. If anybody has any manner of Right, Title, interest and claim of whatsoever nature over the schedule house property they can lodge their claim and objections with relevant Documents with the undersigned within **(10) Ten days** from the date of this notice, failing which the claims of all such persons etc., shall be deemed to have been waived or abandoned and my clients shall proceed with the purchase on the basis that there are no claims of any nature whatsoever in respect of the schedule property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the House Property situated at present BBMP Ward No.105, Old Ward No.21, bearing present Municipal No. 264/1, Old Municpal No. 5, present E-PID No.1010815548, Old PID No.21-116-264, Present 4TH Stage, 4th Block, West of Chord Road, Bangalore-560079, formed out of Sy.No.39 of Agrhara Dasarahalli Village, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Measuring East to West **40' feet** and North South **30' Feet** in all measuring **1200 Sq.ft** and bounded on the:-

East by : Road. West by : Private Property bearing old No. 50, belonging to Sampangi Raman. North by : Property bearing old site No. 6, belonging to Sri .Anjana Murthy, and South by : Property No.264 of Sri. Naryana Murthy .M.S. sold to Sri. V.G. Rajenedra and Smt. V.R. Anuradha.

The same is consisting of about 5 squares A.C. Sheet roofed House with all civic amenities.

Sri. E. Gopal Krishna, Advocate, No. 122, 1st floor, Mahesh Market, Balepet, Bangalore-560 053. CELL : 9448950350.

Bangalore Date : 14-03-2026

From Page One

U.S. bombs Iran's Kharg Island; Tehran hits back

Iran has continued to launch widespread missile and drone attacks on Israel and neighbouring Gulf Arab states, and effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil passes, even as U.S. and Israeli warplanes pummel military and other targets across Iran.

Elements from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and the amphibious assault ship *USS Tripoli* have been ordered to West Asia, according to the U.S. official. Marine Expeditionary Units are able to conduct amphibious landings, but they also specialise in bolstering security at embassies, evacuating civilians, and providing disaster relief. The deployment does not necessarily indicate that a ground operation is imminent or will take place.

The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, as well as the *Tripoli* and other amphibious assault ships carrying the marines, are based in Japan and have been in the Pacific Ocean for several days, according to images released by the military. The *Tripoli* was spotted by commercial satellites sailing alone near Taiwan, putting it more than a week away from the waters off Iran.

The U.S. strikes on Iran's Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf targeted military sites but left its oil infrastructure alone for now, Mr. Trump said in a social media post. But he warned that if Iran or anyone else interferes with the passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, he will reconsider his decision not to "wipe out the oil infrastructure."

Ebrahim Zolfaghari, spokesperson for the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, warned they will target "all oil, economic, and energy infrastructures belonging to oil companies across the region that have American shares or cooperate with America."

The Iranian joint military command also threatened to attack cities in the UAE, saying the U.S. used "ports, docks and hideouts" there to launch strikes on the islands. It called on people to evacuate those areas where it said U.S. forces were sheltering.

Iran's semiofficial Fars news agency said on Saturday that the U.S. strikes caused no damage to the island's oil infrastructure. The agency said at least 15 explosions followed the strikes, which it said targeted an air defence facility, a naval base, the airport control tower and an offshore oil company's helicopter hangar.

Wangchuk released as govt. revokes detention

In an interview with *The Hindu* on March 9, Ms. Angmo had said that Mr. Wangchuk would not pursue the path of agitation after his release, but will continue to be part of the movement to demand constitutional safeguards for Ladakh through discussion and dialogue.

Reacting to his wife's statement, Mr. Wangchuk conveyed through one of his social media accounts on March 12 that he has not stepped away from activism, but added that it would require "clarity, unity, and sincere dialogue."

Mr. Wangchuk was best known as a climate activist before he took up the cause of Statehood for Ladakh. Ms. Angmo is the co-founder of the Himalayan Institute of Alternative Learning in Ladakh.

'No space for agitation in Ladakh'

The newly appointed Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh Vinai Kumar Saxena welcomed the decision, but added that "there is no space for agitation and violence in Ladakh and all issues pertaining to the aspirations and concerns of the people, would be addressed through dialogue with various stakeholders, community leaders and citizens."

The Ministry of Home Affairs said in a statement on Saturday that the government remains committed to fostering an environment of peace, stability, and mutual trust in Ladakh so as to facilitate constructive and meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders. In furtherance of this objective, the NSA order against Mr. Wangchuk is being revoked, the Ministry said.

Ladakh groups to protest tomorrow despite Sonam Wangchuk's release

Struggle for rights continue, say civil society groups while demanding release of two more detained since September 2025; Opposition questions Centre over the prolonged detention of the activist, says PM should apologise to people of Ladakh

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

A protest planned for Monday demanding constitutional safeguards for Ladakh will not be called off even after the release of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk from detention, civil society groups in the Union Territory, who are also engaged in dialogue with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, said on Saturday.

The civil society groups in Ladakh had announced the protest on March 10 over several demands, including Statehood. FILE PHOTO

The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), the two groups representing the Leh and Kargil dstricts of Ladakh, had announced the protest on March 10 to draw the Centre's attention towards their demands - which include Statehood, inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution (tribal status), a Member of Parliament each for Leh and Kargil, and filling of existing government vacancies. They said the meetings of the high-powered committee had not led to any outcome yet.

Cherring Dorjay Lakruk, co-convener of the LAB and the president of the influential Ladakh Buddhist Association told *The Hindu* that the release of Mr. Wangchuk was one of several issues being pursued and the protest will go on as planned. "Sonam Wangchuk's release is one of the several issues we have been pursuing. Our demands for constitutional safeguards and development for the region are yet to be fulfilled. The protest will go on as planned, there are two other activists who remain in jail (since September 2025)," he said.

Sajjad Kargili of the KDA said around 1,000 people are expected to converge in Kargil on Monday to protest. "The revocation of NSA [National security Act] is a welcome move. However, our struggle for our legitimate rights continues. We also demand the immediate release of Deldan Namgial (former Congress MLA) and Smanla Dorjey and appeal that all charges against those detained on September 24 be dropped unconditionally," Mr. Kargili said.

Meanwhile, Opposition parties questioned the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government for the prolonged detention of Mr. Wangchuk. Claiming that the Narendra Modi government now stood exposed, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal said the time spent in jail by the climate activist is a loss to the country. "The Modi government stands exposed once again. A scientist and climate activist who had dedicated his life to the nation was arrested without any evidence. The months he spent in jail were not only a personal loss for him but also a loss to the country. This sheer dictatorship must be called out and stopped immediately," he said.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said BJP first offered Statehood to Ladakh and then backtracked. "He [Mr. Wangchuk] should not have been jailed at all. The BJP should have supported his protest, but they betrayed him," Mr. Yadav said.

Welcoming the move to revoke Mr. Wangchuk's detention, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said, "He should never have been arrested".

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said the Modi government should apologise to the people of Ladakh for the "completely bogus" arrest of Mr. Wangchuk. "The INC had condemned the arrest of Sonam Wangchuk on completely bogus grounds six months back. Now the Modi govt. has done a total U-turn. It stands fully exposed. It should apologise to not only Mr. Wangchuk and his family, but to the people of Ladakh as well. It should also immediately release all those who were detained for staging peaceful and democratic protests," Mr. Ramesh posted on X.

Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot questioned the "convenient use" of laws such as the NSA. "The same individual, who just a few months ago was branded a threat to national security and thrown behind bars, is now suddenly being released—meaning no evidence was found against him.?"

Ladakh, earlier part of Jammu and Kashmir, became a Union Territory in 2019 following the reading down of Article 370 of the Constitution and the civil soiety groups have been demanding constitutional safeguards since 2020.

11 Indians booked in U.S. over visa fraud scheme

Press Trust of India
NEW YORK

Eleven Indian nationals, living illegally in the U.S., have been charged with visa fraud for conspiring to carry out staged armed robberies of convenience shops, according to U.S. federal prosecutors.

Authorities said the suspects are accused of organising fake robberies to allow the store clerks to falsely claim they were victims of a violent crime on immigration applications towards getting a Green Card.

Authorities said that in the course of the alleged staged robberies, the "robber" would threaten store clerks or the owners with an apparent firearm before taking cash from the register and fleeing, while the interaction was captured on store surveillance video.

The clerks or the store owners would then wait five or more minutes until the "robber" had escaped before calling the police to report the "crime."

The 11 defendants charged on Friday are alleged to have either arranged with the organiser to set up each robbery, or paid for themselves or a family member to participate as a "victim."

Hindus being turned into minorities in West Bengal, says Prime Minister

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Targeting the Trinamool Congress for "dangerous change of demography of most parts of West Bengal", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said that Bengali Hindus were purposely being turned into minorities.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari in Kolkata on Saturday. ANI

The Prime Minister, addressing a public meeting at Kolkata's Brigade Parade Grounds to mark the culmination of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s Parivartan Yatra that covered more than 250 of the 294 Assembly constituencies in the poll-bound State, repeatedly claimed that the countdown of the end of Trinamool Congress government has started, alleging that West Bengal's ruling party does not even consider Hindus as their vote bank.

"Such an open game of appeasement is going on that when refugee Hindus are given citizenship, the entire Trinamool opposes it. These are Hindus who never supported division of the country and considered undivided West Bengal and India as their motherland. The Trinamool opposes attempts to give citizenship to them. Because the Trinamool does not consider Hindus as their vote bank," Mr. Modi said, referring to the Trinamool's opposition to the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019, which has provisions to grant citizenship to Hindus from neighbouring countries including Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister had raised the issue of change in demography in West Bengal during his recent public meetings in the poll-bound State. On Friday, he asserted that the change of demography brought about by illegal infiltration has posed a danger to the "*roti, beti, and maati* (food, women and soil) of West Bengal".

As per the last Census held in 2011, the population of Hindus in West Bengal stood at 70.5% while the Muslims comprised only 27% of the population. There are only two out of 23 districts in the State, where Muslim population is more than Hindus.

With the Assembly election expected to take place in two months, the Prime Minister also launched scathing attacks on the ruling Trinamool in the State on all fronts, calling out the alleged breach of protocol during President Droupadi Murmu's recent visit, and 'communally-charged' remarks by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, attacks against women, including the rape and murder of doctor at RG Kar hospital in 2024, and migration of workers. The Prime Minister also accused the Trinamool of taking the anarchy to Parliament and disrupting the proceedings.

Exuding confidence from the massive turnout at the event, Mr. Modi said that the countdown has begun for those who are running the '*Mahajungle Raj*' in West Bengal. He said that the upcoming election was not for a change in government but to save the soul of Bengal.

Trinamool Minister's residence attacked ahead of Modi's rally

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Shashi Panja

Trinamool Congress Minister and MLA Shashi Panja's residence was attacked on Saturday by Bharatiya Janata Party workers *en route* to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public address in Kolkata. However, both parties accused each other of initiating the violence.

On Saturday morning, before Mr. Modi's meeting at the Brigade ground, clashes broke out between workers and supporters of the two political parties in the streets of north Kolkata, near Girish Park. Ms. Panja, an MLA from north Kolkata, resides at Girish Park. During the violence, her house was pelted with stones and vandalised.

Ms. Panja, Women and Child Development and Social Welfare Minister, said she was physically injured during the attack. She added that several party workers sustained injuries and were sent to a local hospital for treatment.

"I am shocked after this incident... This shows that the BJP is housing goons and murderers. All these years we thought they only murder democracy, but now I realise they want to commit murders physically," Ms. Panja said on Saturday.

Meanwhile, BJP leaders alleged that buses carrying their workers to the Prime Minister's meeting were stopped near Girish Park. BJP Lok Sabha MP Sukanta Majumdar said that after the buses were stopped, Trinamool workers pelted stones at their workers, leading to a scuffle.

As Samriddhi Yatra ends, Nitish promises more development

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Ahead of the Rajya Sabha election on March 16, the third and last leg of the 'Samriddhi Yatra' launched by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar from Supaul, ended in Sheikhpura on Saturday, with the focus on the development of Bihar. Mr. Kumar ended the yatra by inaugurating and laying the foundation stones of 716 projects worth ₹480 crore in Begusarai and Sheikhpura.

Addressing a crowd in Begusarai district, Mr. Kumar said more development would take place in Bihar in the days to come.

Nitish Kumar

The State government had placed special emphasis on the education sector, and several significant measures had been undertaken to reform and improve the education system in Bihar, the CM said.

While highlighting the work done in the State's health sector, Mr. Kumar slammed the Opposition's rule in the State. In the past, healthcare infrastructure was dismal, Primary Health Centres (PHCs) received on average only 39 patients per month, or one or two patients per day.

"Since 2006, comprehensive arrangements have been put in place to provide free medicines and medical treatment in government hospitals. Currently, PHCs receive an average of 11,600 patients every month. Previously, Bihar had only six medical colleges; that number has now doubled to 12," Mr. Kumar said.

Govt. is working to minimise impact of war on people: PM

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that the Congress was capitalising on the war in West Asia to create panic in India.

Addressing a gathering after inaugurating development projects in poll-bound Assam's Silchar, he said the Centre was working hard to minimise the impact of the war on the citizens of the country.

"We expected Congress to play the role of a responsible political party, but it failed yet again to prioritise national interest. Congress is trying hard to ensure people in the country panic and get trapped in a difficult situation, so that it can go after Modi," the Prime Minister said.

He further said that every State in the country has been teaching the Congress a lesson after it got ejected from Assam.

Mr. Modi, on Saturday, laid the foundation stone for the ₹24,000-crore Shillong-Silchar High-Speed Corridor. He said the corridor, the first of its kind in the Northeast, would help the region gain faster access to the vast markets of Southeast Asia.

Congress releases second list of 23 candidates for Assam polls

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The party has also left 15 seats for its alliance partners in the northeastern State

The Congress on Saturday released its second list of 23 party candidates for the upcoming Assam Assembly elections. It has also left 15 seats for its alliance partners in the northeastern State, where Assembly polls are slated in April.

With this, the party has released the names of 65 candidates for the 126-member Assembly in the State.

In the second list of candidates, released by Congress general secretary (organisation), K.C. Venugopal, Nurul Islam will contest from Srijangram seat, Abdul Khaleque from Mandia, Rakibuddin Ahmed from Chamaria, Devid Phukan from Tinsukia and Bipul Gogoi from Tingkhong.

The Congress has set aside the Assembly constituencies of Bajali, Palasbari, Guwahati Central, Goreswar, Morigaon and Barhampur, among others, for the alliance partners.

The Congress released its first list of 42 candidates for the upcoming polls in the State, on March 3, fielding State party chief Gaurav Gogoi from the Jorhat seat.

Taking a lead in announcing the names of its candidates even before the declaration of the polls, the party said Congress Legislature Party leader in Assam, Debabrata Saikia, will contest the election from the Nazira constituency.

Former Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Ripun Bora has been fielded from the Barchalla constituency.

The Congress has been out of power in the northeastern State since 2016.

Mid-day meals: it's a struggle to keep school fires burning amid gas crunch

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Across India, many schools are scrambling to find alternative fuel sources such as firewood and induction stoves to LPG for their mid-day meals programmes.

Schools located in rural areas of States such as Odisha and Telangana that use firewood have been saved from the crisis owing to the shortage of LPG arising from the effects of the West Asia conflict. Many schools are cutting down on their daily menu, affecting the nutritional quality of the food being provided to the children.

The provision of domestic LPG cylinders to mid-day meal schemes has helped stave off an immediate crisis since the government has officially announced curbs only on supply of commercial LPG. But reports indicate that as schools apply for refills, the situation may become dicey. The ongoing disruption in LPG import due to the war has coincided with the exam season, which means fewer students in schools coming in for lunch. The closure of schools after exams is coming as a relief for education authorities.

Telangana has 24,972 schools. "There are close to 9,000 schools that rely solely on LPG for the meal programme. Some also have induction stoves," says Naveen Nicolas, Director of School Education, Telangana. Most of the remaining schools depend on local firewood for mid-day meal preparations.

In Hyderabad, meals are supplied from centralised kitchens operated by trusts or NGOs. "All our operations are steam-based and use firewood and briquettes [compressed blocks of coal]. LPG use is minimal for the workers, and required stock is available," said Ramana Reddy, manager at Manna Trust that supplies to 950 schools.

Need to nourish: To prepare meals for students under the mid-day meal scheme, a worker takes out a domestic LPG cylinder at an Akshaya Patra Foundation kitchen in Visakhapatnam. V. RAJU

Odisha currently serves meals to 16,46,497 students out of 38,62,521 enrolled across 50,070 schools under the PM POSHAN Scheme. In rural parts of the State, meals are traditionally cooked using firewood, while in urban pockets authorities are beginning to confront a potential fuel crisis.

In Karnataka, the programme largely relies on domestic LPG cylinders supplied by the State government to schools and anganwadi centres, preventing it from the shortage of commercial cylinders that has affected hotels and eateries across the State. However, the shortage has begun to affect private accommodation facilities such as hostels and paying guest (PGs) establishments.

Meanwhile, Sunita, a mid-day meal worker at Kishanpura primary school in Haryana's Jind, said the LPG cylinders are being delivered although the dealers are not taking calls easily and had to be called repeatedly.

Mud stoves come handy

In several districts in Bihar, such as Darbhanga, Madhubani, Gaya, Purnia, Aurangabad, Rohtas and Bhojpur, school kitchens are switching to traditional earthen cooking stoves made of mud using firewood and coal.

Manju Devi, the cook at Anganwadi Centre no. 156 in Samastipur district, said, "A request was made to refill the gas cylinder one week back but still we did not get the gas cylinder so, headmaster has directed us to cook the mid-day meal on *Chullah* [earthen stove] so that children do not go hungry."

In Bihar, nearly 13 million children studying in the State's government schools eat mid-day meals every day.

In Assam, many schools in rural and semi-urban areas rely on firewood, thus saving them from a crisis.

"We provide mid-day meals to a substantial number of students, for which we require two LPG cylinders a month. We applied for and received a cylinder a few days ago. Fortunately, we are approaching the end of final exams in Assam, and the schools will remain closed until the next session after the results are declared. We could have faced a problem otherwise," Hem Chandra Kakati, the principal in charge of Guwahati's Assam Railway Higher Secondary School, said.

Radha (name changed), noon-meal organiser in a government school in Chennai, has two cylinders stocked. She is not worried about the stocks running out as the academic year will end in April. "We cook food for over 300 children and since it's exams, the primary students come in only in the afternoon. Further, as it's exam season not many students come to the school. So, we have enough LPG cylinders to last us until April," she added. Authorities have notified gas agencies that schools and Anganwadis must be given priority for cylinders.

Krishna Pradhan, President of the West Bengal ASHA Workers' Union, said that all ICDS centres are struggling to keep their kitchens working, especially in the rural areas. "Most rural area schools and ICDS centres have shifted to either wood or coal ovens. Centres closer to cities and towns are faring slightly better. But everyone is struggling," Ms. Pradhan added.

She also said that many have resorted to bringing gas cylinders from their own homes to ensure that the young children do not go without food.

Two LPG carriers cross Strait of Hormuz, head to India: official

Vessels *Shivalik* and *Nanda Devi* carry approximately 46,000 tonnes each of cooking gas, says Special Secretary at Shipping Ministry; *Shivalik* is expected to reach Mundra Port on March 16, while the latter will reach Kandla Port by March 17, he adds

Saptaparno Ghosh
M. Kalyanaraman
NEW DELHI/CHENNAI

Two liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) carriers, *Shivalik* and *Nanda Devi,* have crossed the Strait of Hormuz and are headed to India, Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Special Secretary at Ministry of Shipping and Waterways, said at an inter-ministerial press briefing here Friday.

"Of the 24 vessels with an Indian-flag operating in the Persian Gulf, LPG carriers *Shivalik* and *Nanda Devi* crossed the Strait of Hormuz early this morning safely, and are headed to India," Mr. Sinha stated.

The senior official added that the two carriers were holding approximately 46,000 tonnes each of cooking gas, cumulatively 92,712 tonnes.

Shivalik is expected to reach its destination, Mundra Port, by March 16, while *Nanda Devi* is expected at Kandla Port on March 17, he said.

Promising pitch: With the exit of *Shivalik* and *Nanda Devi*, a total of 22 vessels are on standby at the western part of the Strait of Hormuz, says a senior official. REUTERS

With the exit of the two vessels, a total of 22 vessels are on standby at the western part of the Strait. As many as 611 seafarers are on board the ships.

Of the 22 vessels, Mr. Sinha said, six are loaded with LPG, one with natural gas, and four with crude oil. One is a chemical products tanker.

Together these constitute the energy-based vessels. Of the remainder, three are container ships, one is a dredger, one is an emptying ballast, two are bulk carriers and three are dry-docks (ships that are headed for repair and/or maintenance).

The Special Secretary reiterated that the Ministry instructed LPG carriers about priority rebirthing for continued energy supply.

Six such vessels in the past three days, which have sailed from outside the Gulf area, have been accorded the provision, he added. India imports about 200 lakh tonnes of LPG every year. Much of this come from foreign flagged vessels chartered by oil majors.

Two days worth imports

When the two India-bound ships discharge their cargo, it will add two days worth of imports India was using prior to the start of the conflict that triggered curbs on commercial use of LPG.

At least two of Indian-flagged LPG carriers are still in the Persian Gulf. And some are headed towards East Asia.

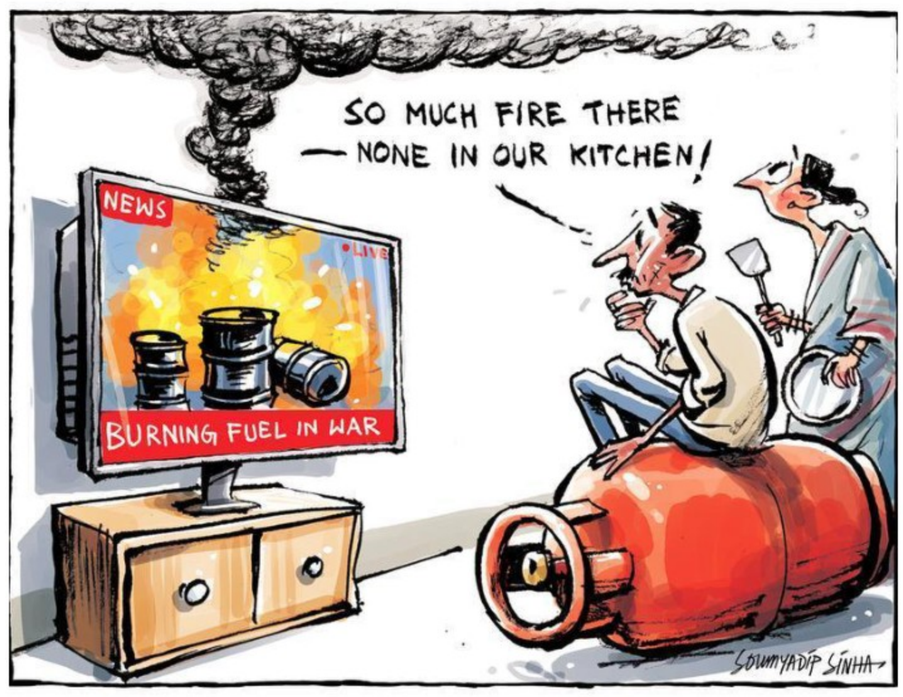
With the Persian Gulf out of bounds, India will need to find alternative sources from where these vessels can bring in LPG. Many ships including *Sahyadri* are drifting off the coast of India waiting for orders.

In November 2025, India's oil companies signed a one-year contract to import 2.2 million tonnes of LPG from the U.S. Gulf Coast in 2026. This represents about 10% of India's annual imports. The U.S. is the number one exporter of LPG in the world with some 60 million tonnes of annual exports.

The contracts with the U.S. are underway but the voyages will take some two months for a round-trip.

The U.S. may well be the biggest alternative source of LPG imports but long voyage durations will pose a challenge for India, which is among the world's largest importers of LPG.

On the draw



Centre bars PNG users from refilling LPG connections

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

Seeking to ensure a steady supply to domestic consumers exclusively availing liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) amid the impact on imports due to tensions in West Asia, the government on Saturday mandated that individuals with a piped natural gas (PNG) connection will neither be allowed to obtain a new LPG connection nor retain an existing additional connection of liquefied petroleum gas.

The amended supply order also bars them from obtaining any refill.

Further, the order states that individuals having both LPG and natural gas connections at present "immediately surrender their domestic LPG connection". This comes amid imports of cooking gas being affected because of the closure of the Strait of Hormuz amid the ongoing tensions in West Asia. For context, India imports about 60% of its overall cooking gas requirements. Of this, around 90% is routed through the Strait.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, in two separate orders, had directed that all propane and butane, among other streams, be utilised to spur the production of cooking gas. LPG is a mixture of propane and butane. The orders had also directed that public sector oil marketing companies ensure that these supplies are directed to domestic LPG consumers. Addressing reporters at an inter-ministerial briefing on Saturday, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary at the Ministry, said production of cooking gas had increased by about 31% as on date since the government instituted the supply maintenance orders.

Sujata Sharma

On commercial cylinder allocation, she said a total of 29 States and Union Territories combined had already started disbursing commercial cylinders. For context, the Ministry had constituted a panel comprising Executive Directors of three oil marketing companies, Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum, to examine the cooking gas requirements of commercial entities.

Emphasising the Centre's objective of easing pressure on LPG supplies, Ms. Sharma said, "However, amid the ongoing [geopolitical] situation, in order to ease the pressure on LPG, we have urged commercial users who can switch from LPG to PNG, where there is a possibility, to consider the same."

India trying to facilitate talks within BRICS on West Asia crisis: Jaiswal

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Efforts to build a consensus within the BRICS on the ongoing conflict in the Gulf have been slow as several members of the grouping – including Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – are involved in the crisis that began on February 28 when the United States and Israel attacked Iran, said a senior Indian official on Saturday.

"Some BRICS members are directly involved in the current situation in the West Asia region, which has impacted forging a consensus on a common BRICS position on the ongoing conflict. As Chair of BRICS, India has been facilitating discussions among members through the Sherpa channel," said Randhir Jaiswal, official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs.

The acknowledgement of intra-BRICS negotiation came even as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar continued his telephone calls with his Iranian counterpart Seyed Abbas Araghchi and other regional diplomats. Mr. Jaishankar held his latest call with Mr. Araghchi on Thursday, when the BRICS Sherpas meeting took place virtually. "In this conversation, we discussed and exchanged views on bilateral matters as well as issues related to BRICS," Mr. Jaishankar said in an online post on Friday.

Closed skies and costly detours: why Indian airlines are among the worst hit by the conflict in West Asia

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

As Gulf routes that have long formed the backbone of Indian airlines' international networks are hit by the ongoing regional conflict, aircraft utilisation at domestic carriers has dropped sharply.

At Air India Express, for example, nearly a quarter of the fleet is effectively idle. "About one in four aircraft of Air India Express's 115-strong fleet is grounded," an industry executive said about the country's second-largest domestic airline. While the aircraft are not formally grounded, airlines are flying them once every three or four days to keep them serviceable, and because parking stands are scarce at several airports.

For many Indian carriers, destinations across the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait account for the bulk of their international flying, reflecting the presence of more than 90 lakh Indians living across the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. But flight restrictions and heightened military activity in the region led to about 2,600 flight cancellations by Indian carriers in the first nine days after tensions between Iran and Israel escalated on February 28.

Many IndiGo aircraft are now idling at airports during hours that were once used to operate frequent flights to West Asia. REUTERS

While operations in Oman are normal, major hubs such as Dubai, Doha, and Abu Dhabi continue to face severe disruptions and intermittent suspensions.

In more normal times, roughly half of all international passengers flying to or from India travels on a Gulf route, using hubs such as Dubai, Doha, and Abu Dhabi to connect onward to flights to the U.S., Canada, and Europe.

Nearly four crore passengers travelled between India and the Gulf in 2025, making it the country's largest international aviation corridor by far.

Rising costs

Several other factors are also driving up operational costs for airlines. Jet fuel prices in India have risen by about $50 per kilolitre since January to $150 per kilolitre, while aircraft operating on Gulf routes are also facing additional war-risk insurance premiums of about ₹18,000 per seat.

Though airlines have announced a fuel surcharge of up to ₹400 on domestic routes (and higher for international routes), these barely cover 10% to 12% of the ticket fare, executives say.

The unpredictability of flight schedules to West Asia caused by security threats, along with last-minute slot allocations by airports in the region, leaves airlines with little time to sell seats, contributing to the underutilisation of aircraft. Most flights to these destinations are operating with very few passengers.

Redeploying their idle aircraft on Southeast Asian routes is not a viable option for airlines, as that market is already oversupplied and earnings per passenger per kilometre are significantly lower than on Gulf routes. The same holds true for domestic services, where margins are thinner and airlines must additionally contend with VAT and other levies on aviation turbine fuel that do not apply to international flights. In India, fuel alone accounts for about 40% of airlines' operating costs.

For Air India, the challenges are even greater as its flights to Europe and the U.S. are now forced to take a longer southerly route to avoid Iranian airspace, with some U.S. services also requiring fuel stops. This comes on top of the earlier closure of Pakistani airspace following Operation Sindoor last April.

As a result, flight times have lengthened sharply. A Delhi-London service now takes around 12 hours, compared with about nine hours last year. Flights to New York, which must now stop in Rome for refuelling, can take close to 20 hours instead of roughly 15 hours earlier.

INBRIEF

Amit Shah urges Punjab to give BJP a chance in 2027

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday accused the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab of pushing the State into a spiral of corruption, drugs, unemployment, debt, crime and religious conversions, and urged people to give the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) a chance in the 2027 Assembly election. Addressing the party's 'Badlav rally' in Moga district, Mr. Shah asserted, "In the 2027 Assembly election, the BJP will fight to form its own government." Taking a dig at the AAP, Mr. Shah said that the Chief Minister was serving as the pilot of AAP supremo [Arvind] Kejriwal.

SIT to probe assassination attempt on Farooq Abdullah

The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday constituted a special investigation team (SIT) for a thorough investigation into the assassination attempt on former Chief Minister and National Conference president Farooq Abdullah at a marriage ceremony on March 11. The seven-member SIT, headed by a Deputy Inspector-General-level officer was formed "considering the seriousness and sensitivity of the case", Inspector-General of Police Bhim Sen Tuti said in an order, adding that the SIT "must complete the investigation promptly and thoroughly" and "adhering to the statutory timeframe".

SC seeks status report on Ganga bank encroachments

The Supreme Court has directed the Centre and the National Mission for Ganga Authority to file a report detailing the status of encroachments on the banks of the River Ganga across all the States through which it flows. A Bench headed by Justice J.B. Pardiwala ordered the Union government and the Authority to provide details of the measures taken to implement an October 7, 2016 notification issued by the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation on the rejuvenation, protection, management and ecological flow of the river and its tributaries, which are choked by plastic waste and riddled with illegal structures on the banks.

PM Unity Malls to boost U.P.'s traditional handicrafts

The Uttar Pradesh government on Saturday said products from 75 districts of the State will receive national and international platforms through PM Unity Malls. The initiative, aimed at providing new markets for local products and traditional craftsmanship, is being implemented through the projects in Agra, Varanasi and Lucknow. "This initiative will enable artisans, women and youth to connect directly with larger markets. ODOP (One District One Product) and GI-tagged products from various districts will gain recognition at both national and international levels," an official statement said. The initiative is expected to revive traditional industries.

SUDOKU

					8		7	
1	6				4		9	
	2				7	5		
8	7				3	4	5	
	5	2	9				8	3
		5	3				4	
	3		4				2	6
	1		7					

No.SS6820 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	9	1	5	2	8	3	7	6
6	2	3	7	9	4	1	8	5
8	7	5	1	3	6	9	2	4
1	8	9	3	6	2	4	5	7
5	4	6	8	1	7	2	3	9
2	3	7	9	4	5	8	6	1
9	5	2	6	8	1	7	4	3
3	6	8	4	7	9	5	1	2
7	1	4	2	5	3	6	9	8

Atomic clock on NavIC satellite calls time; ISRO's 'GPS' weakens

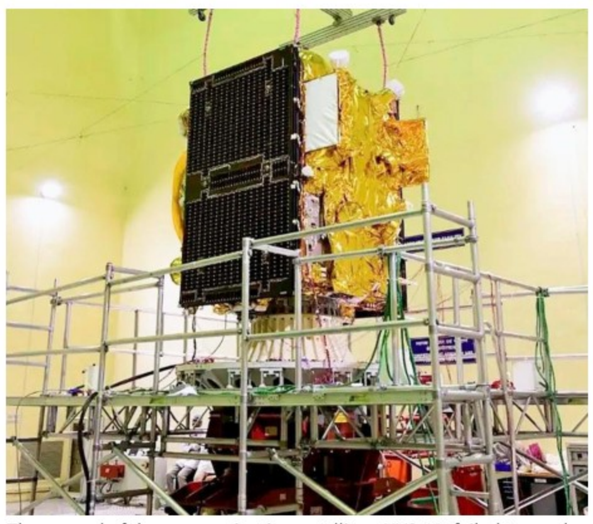
At least four satellites needed to keep NavIC functional, Centre says; failure of IRNSS-1F's Swiss-made clock will bring number down to three; space agency to install indigenously developed rubidium clocks for next series of satellites

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The last atomic clock aboard the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS)-1F has failed, the Indian Space Research Organisation has said in a statement. This further weakens the country's indigenous "GPS" system, called NavIC.

Atomic clocks are critical to satellites to offer positional, navigational, and timing services. Since the eight satellites in the IRNSS system were launched between 2013 and 2018, the Union government has encouraged Indian enterprises, including manufacturers of computer and electronic goods having timing services, to rely on NavIC for determining the Indian Standard Time.

Currently, the U.S. GPS, with its 30 satellite systems, is the reference standard for such purposes.



The second of the new navigation satellites, NVS-02, failed to reach its intended orbit after launch in January 2025. FILE PHOTO

"On 13th March 2026, the procured on-board atomic clock stopped functioning. However, the satellite will continue to function in-orbit for various societal applications to provide one way broadcast messaging services. IRNSS-1F satellite launched in March 2016 has completed its design mission life of 10 years on 10th March 2026," the ISRO said in a statement on its website on Friday.

Nine IRNSS satellites have been launched since 2013. Eight of them reached their intended orbit. The last of this constellation of satellites (IRNSS-1I) was launched in 2018.

While equivalent American, Chinese and European systems provide global positioning services, NavIC is expected to do so only within India and within a radius of 1,500 km. This is, however, viewed more as a fallback system in case of future global conflicts in which India is denied access to these foreign constellations.

RTI query

In July 2025, the ISRO revealed in response to a Right to Information request that five of the NavIC satellites were completely defunct, with all three clocks in each not working. In one of the three satellites with functioning atomic clocks, two of the three clocks had failed.

The atomic clocks in this constellation of satellites were imported by the ISRO from SpectraTime, a Switzerland-based maker of high-precision atomic clocks. Four working satellites could be relied upon for providing positional and navigation services, Union Minister of State for Space Jitendra Singh has said in Parliament. With the failure of the IRNSS-1F's clock, their number is down to three.

For the next series of satellites that will replace the impaired and ageing fleet of IRNSS satellites – two of the three being used have passed their rated shelf life of 10 years though it's possible for these systems to function beyond – ISRO has decided to install indigenously developed rubidium clocks.

One replacement satellite, the NVS-01, launched in May 2023, hosts an indigenously developed rubidium (atomic) clock. The second, the NVS-02 satellite, launched in January 2025, failed to reach its intended orbit.

The ISRO had earlier said that it would be launching at least three satellites by the end of 2026 to replace defunct and ageing satellites.

Syed Ata Hasnain takes oath as Bihar Governor

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Lt. Gen. Syed Ata Hasnain (retd) took oath as the Governor of Bihar on Saturday. Patna High Court Chief Justice Sangam Kumar Sahoo administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Hasnain at a ceremony at the Lok Bhavan.

Mr. Hasnain took the oath as the 43rd Governor of Bihar since India's Independence. He succeeds Arif Mohammad Khan who was appointed in January last year.

Mr. Hasnain was named the Governor of Bihar on March 5, 2026 as part of major gubernatorial appointments effected by President Droupadi Murmu.

Mr. Hasnain remained active in national and academic roles even after retirement. In 2018, he was appointed chancellor of the Central University of Kashmir.

He has been awarded six decorations by the President and two by the Army chief.

41 of 166 tiger deaths in country last year reported in Maharashtra

Snehal Mutha
MUMBAI

Of the 166 tiger deaths recorded in the country last year, 41 occurred in Maharashtra, the State government informed the Legislative Council during the ongoing Budget session.

Forest Minister Ganesh Naik said the State recorded 41 tiger deaths in 2025, according to data from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). He was responding to queries from members regarding recent tiger deaths reported from the Pench Tiger Reserve in Nagpur district.

Members of the Legislative Council, including Satyajit Tambe and Parinay Fuke, raised concern after the death of one adult tiger and two cubs from the reserve, after similar incidents in December and January.

Responding to the queries, Mr. Naik said several measures are being taken to curb poaching and protect wildlife.

Curbing poaching

"The Special Tiger Protection Force and dog squad are constantly patrolling to monitor poaching activities. Technology is also being used to track suspicious movements, including the use of camera surveillance and mobiles enabled with the M-Stripes app. A Wildlife Crime Cell has been established," Mr. Naik said.

The Maharashtra government says the Special Tiger Protection Force and dog squad are monitoring poaching activities. FILE PHOTO

Mr. Naik also mentioned the creation of a Rapid Rescue Unit and a Transit Treatment Centre.

The issue of wildlife poaching and human-wildlife conflict has figured prominently in the State legislature discussions during the Budget session, with legislators raising concern about the deaths of both humans and animals, including tigers and leopards.

Mr. Naik told the House that changes in animal behaviour and habitat patterns had intensified such conflicts, with animals often entering agricultural fields.

Referring to leopards, he said that the State Cabinet had approved a proposal to change their protection category from Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act – which receives the highest level of protection – to Schedule II, where penalties are less stringent, and the government has approached the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to formalise the change.

Environmentalists, however, have strongly opposed the move and urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to reject what they described as a "cruel and regressive" proposal.

"The government should focus on protecting forests and preventing encroachment into wildlife habitats to reduce conflict between humans and animals. Diluting legal protection for leopards will send a dangerous signal at a time when wildlife habitats are already under immense pressure," said NatConnect director B.N. Kumar.

He called for a comprehensive forest conservation policy that would increase forest cover while strictly regulating human intrusion into wildlife zones.

Legal safeguards

Activists also pointed to India's global recognition for conservation initiatives such as Project Tiger and Project Lion, arguing that weakening legal safeguards for protected species would run counter to that vision.

Environmentalists also noted that Maharashtra's leadership had emphasised the need to balance development with conservation, with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis repeatedly saying that "economy and ecology go together" and that human-animal conflict should be addressed through thoughtful and community-driven policies.

Nandakumar Pawar of Sagar Shakti blamed large-scale destruction of forests due to mining, industrial expansion and infrastructure projects for pushing wildlife closer to human settlements.

"Instead of addressing habitat loss, the government is talking about killing voiceless and innocent wildlife," he said.

Former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi with actor-turned-MP Kamal Haasan at the book launch in New Delhi. PTI

India at crossroads, next step to define its future: Kamal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Releasing a collection of essays by grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi, *India and Her Futures*, actor-turned-MP Kamal Haasan on Saturday said that the country is at a crossroads. "We have to choose a path. And the direction we choose will determine our character and our nation for generations to come," he said adding that the far-right is getting strengthened across the world.

Appreciating Mr. Gandhi for coining a phrase, hatriotism, Mr. Haasan said he has been a regular user of the word. "Hatriotism is rooted in fear, exclusion, and diminishes, not only the pride, but the nation itself," he said adding that the question before our country is whether we join the chorus of nations exporting division as politics or remain true to the extraordinary, ethical, and moral imagination that created India.

Mr. Gandhi said the world is in the midst of a war, the most unusual and unprecedented kind. "We have become a callous people in callous times in a callous world," he said, adding that the war in West Asia has resulted in police having to guard LPG cylinder depots in India. "The war has come to our doorsteps. But that war is not just the war that we are talking about in literal terms. It is the war that has been created by a sense of us and them, we and they, us and the other," he said.

Poor diet is causing adult diseases in children: scientist

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

With the recently released World Obesity Atlas placing India second globally after China in childhood obesity, nutrition scientist Zeeshan Ali warned that the crisis could worsen sharply if left unchecked.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Dr. Ali, from the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in Washington DC, said India could also see a steep rise in paediatric chronic diseases that were traditionally associated with adults.

The report states that more than 41 million children (aged 5-19) in India have a high body mass index (BMI), including about 14 million living with obesity. The number is projected to rise to 56 million by 2040, driven by poor diets, high consumption of sugary drinks, and low physical activity.

Packaged meals

Dr. Ali blamed rapid urbanisation for these trends, which is causing a nutritional transition in the country, wherein traditional diets rich in plant foods are being replaced by restaurant meals and packaged foods high in refined carbohydrates, added sugars, and unhealthy fats.

"Another complexity is the coexistence of undernutrition and overnutrition within the same population. This doesn't just mean that high rates of hunger and stunting exist alongside a rapid surge in obesity. It also means that children and adults across various socioeconomic groups are often meeting or exceeding the caloric requirement," he said, adding that the issue requires action at the policy, socioeconomic, and household levels.

"One way to improve children's health is to re-emphasise indigenous foods and replace refined oils, saturated fats, and empty calories (food having little to no nutrients) that are becoming more common in modern diets."

Zeeshan Ali

The World Obesity Federation, which released the report, noted that more than 200 million school-age children globally (aged 5-19) are living with overweight and obesity, concentrated in just 10 countries, including India.

Long-term issues

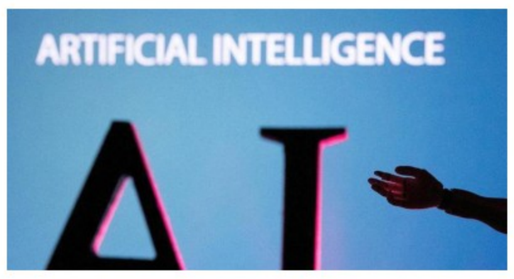
Dr. Ali cautioned that excess weight developed in childhood often continues into adulthood.

"They will also have a higher likelihood of developing conditions such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD)," he said.

He cautioned that even before adulthood, children with excess body weight may develop reduced insulin sensitivity and disturbances in lipid metabolism, which can affect puberty (early menarche in girls and potential changes in pubertal timing in boys), hormonal health, and long-term health trajectories.

Beyond physical health, childhood and adolescent obesity also carries significant psychosocial consequences, including stigma, reduced self-esteem, and social challenges during formative years, he added.

INBRIEF



Star Health sees bigger role for AI in claim settlement

Star Health and Allied Insurance Company expects the number of cashless claims settled using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to increase from the existing about 20% up to 50% in the next two years. Towards this the standalone health insurer is ramping up investments in technology covering different aspects of the business, from customer acquisition, claim settlement to cyber security. "Future is digital, tech, AI and we are investing heavily," Whole-time Director Himanshu Walia said, estimating the investment on technology to increase from around ₹120 crore this fiscal to ₹200 in FY27. Apart from helping reduce manual intervention and improve the turnaround time further, AI/ML deployment becomes important in terms of detecting fraud, he said in an interaction . Star Health has developed AI models with data of last 20 years.

JSW Steel starts work on Mozambique coking coal mine

JSW Steel has started work on its coking coal mining project Minas de Revuboè (MdR) in the Moatize coal basin in Mozambique. MdR has 850 million tonnes (mt) of reserves and the potential to yield 250 mt of usable coking coal. In the first phase, JSW Steel targets producing 2.4 mtpa of hard coking coal over two-and-half years. MdR is located about 10 km north of Tete city, 450 km north of Beira Port and 900 km south-west of Nacala Port, positioning it as one of the most favourably located coking coal assets globally for supply to Indian steel plants. The project will be key for JSW Steel's backward integration strategy and is expected to provide long-term supply assurance for one of the most critical and cost-intensive inputs in steel manufacturing. India's domestic premium coking coal resources remain limited, making captive overseas sourcing a strategic imperative, said the company.

Ahead of kharif season, India stares at fertilizer shortage

Parliamentary standing committee seeks structured measures including a 'Fertilizer Supply Security Fund' to tide over crisis

A. M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

Far cry: The panel observed India's dependence on imports for critical fertilizer inputs remains a major structural vulnerability. ANI

With kharif season set to begin by month-end, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Fertilizers headed by Trinamool Congress MP Azad Kirti Jha, has warned of an acute shortage of essential fertilizers.

Citing the ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia and consequent pressure on international shipping routes, the panel, in a report tabled in Parliament on Friday, underlined the need for a "proactive and forward-looking strategy" to safeguard India's fertilizer supply chain.

Though the government has been putting up a brave face by maintaining that the country has adequate stock of urea, Nitrogen-Phosphorus-Potassium (NPK) and Di Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) fertilizers, the Union Fertilizer Department, headed by former BJP president J.P. Nadda, has been working with various ministries to ensure adequate supplies by the beginning of May across the country to meet the requirements during kharif season.

Recommending a 'Fertilizer Supply Security Fund', the parliamentary panel observed that India's dependence on imports for critical fertilizer inputs remains a major structural vulnerability. On urea, one of the most used fertilizers, the panel noted that domestic production of urea stood at 306.67 lakh metric tonne (LMT) in 2024-25, and imports of approximately 85 LMT were projected for 2026-27, entailing a subsidy outgo of ₹91,000 crore for indigenous urea and ₹31,999 crore for imported urea.

The domestic production meets only about 10% of rock phosphate requirements, potash is almost entirely imported, and sulphur also has limited domestic availability. "This near-total import dependence exposes the country's fertilizer supply chain to the full brunt of geopolitical disruptions, global commodity price volatility, and foreign exchange risks. In particular, the ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and the consequent pressures on international shipping routes underline the need for a proactive and forward-looking strategy to safeguard India's fertilizer supply chain," it said.

The panel flagged "acute shortage" of DAP during recent seasons, which necessitated a special additional support package of ₹3,500 per MT over and above the nutrient-based subsidy for DAP, and cited it as a stark illustration of this vulnerability. Urging the government not to wait for a crisis to trigger corrective action, it mooted a "Fertilizer Supply Security Fund."

Though the import share of urea decreased from 28.5% in 2020-21 to 15.5% in 2024-25, the panel said production had remained stagnant at approximately 305-315 LMT against a consumption of around 390-400 LMT, resulting in continued substantial import volumes.

Centre amends rules to strengthen captive power generation

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Verification of captive status will now be undertaken for the entire financial year.

In a bid to strengthen captive power generation at a time of energy transition to sustainable fuels, the Union government on Saturday amended the Electricity Rules, 2005 to "remove ambiguities" related to the sector.

"The amendments seek to align the captive generation regime with modern corporate structures and evolving industrial energy needs, particularly as companies increasingly invest in non-fossil fuel based captive power projects," the Power Ministry said in a statement. "By clarifying ownership provisions, simplifying rules for group captive arrangements, and establishing a clear verification mechanism, the amendments aim to reduce regulatory ambiguity and disputes," it added.

Captive power generation involves industrial consumers producing electricity to meet their own needs rather than depending completely on the public grid.

One of the major amendments to the Rules is that the verification of captive status will now be undertaken for the entire financial year to ensure "clarity and uniformity in implementation." States and Union Territories have been directed to designate a nodal agency to verify captive status, with effect from April 1, while the responsibility for inter-state captive power will rest with the National Load Despatch Centre.

Pending verification of captive status, cross-subsidy surcharge and additional surcharge will not be levied if the captive users submit a prescribed declaration.

The amendments also provide greater flexibility in cases where multiple entities join hands to operate group captive power projects. Captive users will now be able to draw power based on their operational requirements, subject to overall compliance with ownership and consumption norms and will not be disqualified if an individual users' consumption exceeds their proportionate entitlement.

The definition of ownership has also been clarified to include subsidiaries, holding companies and other subsidiaries of the holding company of the entity that establishes the captive generating plant, recognising modern corporate structures where power assets are often developed through group entities or special purpose vehicles.

NMDC clocks a record 50 MT iron ore output

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

NMDC's iron ore production has touched 50 million tonnes and with a fortnight to go for FY26 the miner is set to add more to what is already a new record output in a fiscal year.

It is a significant milestone that comes days ahead of the close of FY26, the public sector miner said, announcing the record 50 MT production. The previous highest for the company was 45.2 MT that came in 2023-2024. Last fiscal, it had reported 44.04 MT output.

"Reaching 50 million tonnes is a notable achievement and reflects the strong progress made under NMDC 2.0. What once took decades to build, we have accelerated in just a few years through sharper execution, responsible mining practices and a clear commitment to national priorities," CMD Amitava Mukherjee said.

The iron ore production has increased by nearly two-thirds since 2015 when it was about 30 MT, with nearly one-fifth of the current capacity added in the last four years. Established in 1958, NMDC, from a modest 10 MT output in 1978, has transformed into a backbone of India's iron ore supply chain.

NMDC said it remains central to ensuring the country's iron ore security. As India eyes expansion of steelmaking capacity to 300 MT by 2030, ensuring a reliable domestic supply of iron ore has become a strategic priority, it said.

Mazagon dockyard seeks to make a mark in merchant shipbuilding

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit
MUMBAI

Assortment of sorts: Of the 806 vessels MDL has built so far, only 31 were warships, and eight were submarines. FILE PHOTO

The 251-year old Mazagon dockyard boasts of an enviable skill-set it has cultivated over the years.

Though known as a maker of defence ships, its management cites its record in merchant shipbuilding as well. The company's management has come up with a plan to pivot towards the highly competitive world of commercial shipbuilding. The leadership believes technology transfer alone will not help in India's endeavour to build shipbuilding strength. Operational control may need to be given to strategic partners from South Korea or Japan to help India leapfrog.

A Mumbai landmark

Mazagon is India's only shipyard to have built destroyers and conventional submarines for the Indian Navy. The company, which launched its IPO in 2020, is now listed on the National Stock Exchange as well as the Bombay Stock Exchange. It was given Navratna status in 2024.

Aligning with the government's Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 and Maritime India Vision 2030, MDL is now looking to manufacture commercial and large ships with up to 1 lakh tonne deadweight tonnage, which would translate to 1 lakh tonne of cargo carrying capacity.

"Interestingly, people associate MDL with defence manufacturing. But, of the 806 vessels we have built so far, only 31 are warships, and eight are submarines. The rest are all cargo ships, passenger ships, supply vessels, multipurpose support vessel, water tankers, tugs, dredgers, fishing trawlers, barges and border outposts for various customers in India as well as abroad. MDL has also fabricated and delivered jackets, main decks of well-head platforms, process platforms, jack-up rigs," said Biju George, Director, Shipbuilding.

He emphasised that the yard had the requisite skill-set for its foray into building large merchant ships.

To transition to the future, though, a key question for the yard is whether technology transfer is the way ahead or whether foreign partners like Korean or Japanese companies should be equity holders with operational control.

"The idea is to learn from the companies which have been leading in commercial shipbuilding for decades, and to put India's progress on a fast trajectory. Having skin in the game is very important. That is why we are even willing to give operational control to Korean or Japanese partners while the management control will stay with us and an Indian company," Captain Jagmohan, CMD of Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd. (MDL), said.

Naval shipbuilding

Captain Jagmohan wonders why the country has not yet had a robust commercial shipbuilding profile, over 75 years after independence.

"We are a maritime nation with a strategic location. At this stage, we are expected to have a robust and mature ship-building industry. While our naval shipbuilding has really thrived, we don't have much in commercial shipbuilding. Why this dichotomy?" he asked.

While discussing the issue, he said that the push by the Government of India since the 1960s led to domestic capability-building in construction of naval warships.

"The shipyards always had to catch up with demand. That was never created for the commercial side. For the first time, we have a stable policy framework that is pro-shipbuilding today," he said.

And while government support and subsidies will help bolster production, sustained domestic demand will be key to the country's progress in this challenging domain, he felt. "But it isn't just the domestic demand which will help sustain commercial shipbuilding. We will need to meet the demands of the international markets too," Mr. George said.

Teething troubles

There are teething troubles. MDL awaits a response from the Tamil Nadu government to identify land for the setting up of a 1,050-acre yard in Thoothukudi.

"Our board has approved forming a 1,050 acre yard in Thoothukudi. We were promised by the Tamil Nadu government that they have a one-stop-shop. It is not yet forthcoming. The Chidambaranar Port has to formulate an SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle) and then come to us through an EOI (Expression of Interest). That hasn't happened yet. We have been waiting since November last year," Captain Jagmohan said.

While he said that the yard is willing to wait to go to Tamil Nadu, it isn't happy with the progress so far. "Hopefully, this is just initial teething troubles," he said, adding that the State offered several advantages as it is an industrialised State with a long coast.

"We want to move forward. Once land is identified, we can move forward with respect to getting the partners onboard and so on," he said, adding that he was dismayed at the prospect of paying for the port land. "Many States are giving land free of cost," he said.

APPOINTMENT

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES (DIVYANGJAN) (NIEPMD)
(Dept. Of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India)
Muttukadu, East Coast Road, Kovalam (P.O), Chennai - 603 112. Tamil Nadu – India.
Phone: 044 – 27472046, 27472113, 27472423
Website: www.niepmd.nic.in. Email: niepmd@gov.in, director@niepmd.tn.nic.in
~ (Re-Accredited by NAAC B+2nd Cycle)~ ~ ISO 9001:2015~

Manpower Engagement Notification (Temporary) No.03/2026
(Online Application only)

NIEPMD (D) invites online applications from the eligible candidates for engagement of following post at CRC Karaikal, Pudhucherry.

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Consolidated salary per month
1.	Clinical Assistant (Speech Therapist) (Consultant)	01 (One)	Rs.50,000/-

The aspiring applicants fulfilling the eligibility criteria in all respect can submit their application through online mode. The online registration of application is made available on NIEPMD(D) website, Chennai official link i.e. **https://niepmd.nic.in/notice-category/recruitments./.** For all other details, terms and conditions, please log on to the website **www.niepmd.nic.in**

Sd/-
DIRECTOR

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice
Tender No : **KWA-JB/2113/2026-E11**
RENEWAL of TAILOR MADE GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY FOR KERALA WATER AUTHORITY EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS for the year 2026 - 27.
EMD : Rs. 0, **Tender fee** : Rs. 0, **Last Date for submitting Tender** : 28-03-2026 03:00:pm, Phone : 9746126729
Website : **www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**
Chief Engineer (HRD&GI.)
KWA-JB-GL-6-793-2025-26 Jalabhavan, Thiruvananthapuram

Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation Ltd.
D-Block, Swasthya Bhawan, C-Scheme, Jaipur - 302005
Ph. No. 0141-2223887, Fax No. 0141-2228065, E-Mail-edepmrmsc-rj@nic.in
Ref. No. : F-8() RMSC/EPM/M-3/NIB-881/2025-26/1810 Dated :- 10/03/2026

Corrigendum / Addendum

Bid for item X-Ray Machine (500 ma) (NIB-881) are invited from interested bidders up to Date: 23/03/2026 : 06:00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on Procurement portal website **https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** or **www.dipronline.org or https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in or website http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in.**
UBN No. : MSC2526GLOB00068
Executive Director (EPM)
Raj.Samwad/C/25/22357 Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation

राजस्थान धरोहर प्राधिकरण
मृणाल पर्यटन भवन, संजय मार्ग (विश्वकर्मापुरी थाने के सामने) खासा कोठी, जयपुर-302001
Tel:-0141-2615648/40 Email: rhppa.jaipur@gmail.com *Website: https://artandculture.rajasthan.gov.in/rha

ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 44/2025-26

निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए केन्द्र/राज्य सरकार के अभियांत्रिकी विभागों द्वारा पंजीकृत एवं अनुभवी संवेदकों से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई–टेण्डरिंग प्रक्रिया हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र. सं.	कार्य का विवरण	अनुमानित लागत (रु.)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	Construction of Hadbuji Panorama at Bengti District Phalodi (Raj.) UBN is: HPP2526WSOB00070	310.54 Lakh	15 Months

निविदा से संबंधित समस्त विवरण वेबसाइट **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** एवं **http://sppp.raj.nic.in** पर देखा जा सकता है। इच्छुक निविदादाताओं को अपने डिजीटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेबसाइट **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** पर रजिस्टर करवाना आवश्यक है।
राज.संवाद/सी/25/22355 मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी

The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam-691 583
Phone: 0476-2651215 to 2651217, e-mail: md@kmml.com, URL: www.kmml.com
TENDER NOTICE
For more details please visit E-Tendering Portal, https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

Sl No.	Tender ID	Items
1	2026_KMML_843572_1	Revamping of PIT type furnace
2	2026_KMML_840568_1	Comprehensive AMC for Desktops, Laptops and Printers
3	2026_KMML_847160_1	Supply of Hydrated Lime
4	2026_KMML_846337_1	Supply of Low-Density Polythene (LDPE) film
5	2026_KMML_847290_1	Supply of 100MR Pipe CS ERW IS 3589, 500MM x 8MM & 30MR Pipe CS ERW IS 3589, 600MM x 8MM

Chavara 15.03.2026 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

V.O. CHIDAMBARANAR PORT AUTHORITY
CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
TUTICORIN - 628 004
SAGARMALA

GLOBAL NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Only Through E-Tendering Mode)
VOCPA E-Tendering Website : https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app
NIT No. 08/ PD/Shipbuilding yard /2025-26/D.879 **Date: 14.03.2026**

V.O.Chidambaranar Port invites tenders (Online tenders) in "Two bid system" from interested, reputed, well experienced Consultants

Name of work	Preparation of Basic Engineering and Depth Feasibility study for Shipbuilding cluster in Tuticorin, Tamilnadu
Bid security amount	**Rs. 20,00,000/-** (Rupees Twenty Lakhs only)
Downloading of Tender from VOCPA online e-tendering website / CPP Portal	**16.03.2026 to 15.04.2026**
Pre Proposal Conference date	**01.04.2026 at 12:00** hrs through Video conference (Link will be sent to the bidders who show interest via mail)
Last date and time for submission of e-Tender through online	**15.04.2026 upto 15:00 Hrs**
Online Bid opening date and time	**16.04.2026 at 15:30 Hrs**
Period of completion	As specified in clause 2.1 V of Section 2 of tender.
Validity of tender	**120 days** from the last date fixed for receiving the tender

For further details, visit port Website: **www.vocport.gov.in & https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app**
Ph.No : **0461-2372306** Email : **ce@vocport.gov.in**

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER

V.O. CHIDAMBARANAR PORT AUTHORITY
CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
TUTICORIN - 628 004
SAGARMALA

GLOBAL NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Only Through E-Tendering Mode)
VOCPA E-Tendering Website : https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app
NIT.No:09/PD/OH HAM/PMC/2025-26/D. 881 **Date: 14.03.2026**

V.O.Chidambaranar Port invites tenders (Online tenders) in "Two bid system" from interested, reputed, well experienced Consultants

i	Name of work	Project Management Consultancy services for the Project "Construction of Breakwater, Rock Bund, Wharf and capital dredging and reclamation for backup yard including maintenance thereof on Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) under Development of Outer Harbour at V.O. Chidambaranar Port."
ii	Bid security amount	**Rs. 85,00,000/-** (Rupees Eighty Five lakhs only)
iii	Downloading of Tender from VOCPA online e-tendering website / CPP Portal	**18.03.2026 to 08.04.2026**
iv	Pre Proposal Conference date	**25.03.2026 at 12:00 hrs** through Video conference (Link will be sent to the bidders who show interest via mail)
v	Last date and time for submission of e-Tender through online	**08.04.2026 upto 15:00 Hrs**
vi	Online Bid opening date and time	**09.04.2026 at 15:30 Hrs**
vii	Period of completion	As specified in clause 2.1 V of Section 2 of tender.
viii	Validity of tender	**120 days** from the last date fixed for receiving the tender

For further details, visit port Website: **www.vocport.gov.in & https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app**
Ph.No : **0461-2372306** Email : **ce@vocport.gov.in**

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER

Earth's magnetic flips can last 70,000 years, new study finds

Vasudevan Mukunth

The earth's magnetic field aids navigation but also protects the planet from high-energy radiation from the sun. For decades, geologists believed that when this field periodically flipped, swapping the north and south poles, the process happened relatively quickly, on the order of 10,000 years. However, a new study in *Communications Earth & Environment* has reported evidence to reconsider this notion.

By looking back 40 million years into the earth's history, the team, from France, Japan, and the U.S., found that some transitions last much longer, leaving the planet with a weakened defence for several millennia.

Scientists have identified hundreds of magnetic reversals in the earth's past. However, most high-resolution data comes from the last 17 million years, a small fraction of the planet's life. Based on the recent data, many experts believe the 10,000-year duration is an intrinsic property of the earth's geodynamo, the process by which the churning of the liquid iron outer core generates the magnetic field. The researchers wanted to know if this was always the case. To test this, they turned to deep-sea sediment cores collected during an international drilling expedition in the North Atlantic Ocean and analysed mud that settled on the ocean floor roughly 40 million years ago, during the Eocene epoch.

As these sediments accumulated, small magnetic minerals within the mud aligned themselves with the earth's magnetic field. Once buried, these minerals were trapped, creating a permanent record of the field's direction and strength. The researchers used X-ray scanning and magnetic measurements to 'read' these records. They also used astronomical tuning to match sediment layers to known cycles in the earth's orbital tilt.

Thus the researchers found that one reversal lasted 18,000 years while another stretched across a staggering 70,000 years. The 70,000-year event in particular was characterised by a complex precursor phase and multiple "rebounds" as the field struggled to stabilise.

They also ran numerical simulations of the earth's core and found such reversals to be a natural, if rare, part of the geodynamo's behaviour. During a reversal, the magnetic field loses much of its strength. A weak field for 70,000 years could have exposed the atmosphere and surface life to significantly more solar radiation for a prolonged period. The researchers suggested these long intervals could have influenced ancient environments and the evolution of life on the earth.

Experts clash over HALEU-Th fuel for Indian nuclear reactors

Scientists and industry experts are divided over a study questioning the viability of a nuclear reactor fuel called HALEU-thorium; while critics cite safety risks, proponents argue the technology is vital to achieve national energy goals

Jacob Koshy

A January report in the journal *Current Science* by scientists at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has turned radioactive, with one of India's leading nuclear scientists characterising its conclusions as "misleading". The study compared the relative merits of different mixes of uranium fit for nuclear power and concluded that one option, called HALEU-thorium, was "unsuitable" for India's current fleet of reactors.

The assessment drew an incensed reaction from the Chicago-based company Clean Core Thorium Energy (CCTE). Led by Indian-origin entrepreneur Mehul Shah, CCTE has prepared a HALEU-Th fuel called 'ANEEL'.

In August 2025, CCTE reported a significant burn-up – a marker of the fuel's energy output – at a nuclear reactor run by the U.S. Department of Energy, for HALEU-Th. It subsequently entered an agreement with India's NTPC to "explore" ANEEL's use in Indian reactors.

The *Current Science* study modelled the performance of the pressurised heavy water reactor (PHWR) with three fuel combinations: (i) natural uranium (7 kg of uranium-235 and 993 kg U-238), (ii) HALEU-Th (32 kg of U-235, 129 kg of U-239, and 839 kg of thorium), and (iii) slightly enriched uranium (11 kg of U-235 and 989 kg of U-238). U-235 can sustain a chain reaction; U-238 and thorium mainly act as fertile materials that breed fissile fuel. In their simulation, the BARC scientists found the HALEU-Th combination yielded the highest burn-up of 50 gigawatt-days per tonne (GWd/t) while generating the least amount of spent fuel, a.k.a. radioactive waste: only 14% of what current reactors produce.

The study also said, however, that using HALEU-Th could require significantly changing the design of India's reactors because it also rendered the shutdown rods – a system used to rapidly stop nuclear reactions during an emergency – around 26% less effective. So, it concluded, "HALEU-Th fuel is far from a 'drop-in' option for the present generation of PHWRs."

But to Anil Kakodkar, former chairman of the Department of Atomic Energy and member of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), the conclusion doesn't follow from the results. He believes India's current 700-MWe PHWRs require "no modification" while the 220-MWe variants require "negligible" modification. "They [the study authors] are not understanding this... The conclusions are misleading," he added.

Prof. Koroush Shirvan at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) wrote a letter to the editor of *Current Science* asking the journal "withdraw" the study over its "serious and numerous technical flaws". "I have been supporting [CCTE] since 2016 as the head of their fuel design," Prof. Shirvan wrote to *The Hindu*. Upon reading the paper, he said it "was a bit out of context, since HALEU-Th fuel is not meant for reprocessing, so to compare it to more reprocessing-friendly fuel forms is quite misleading."

Current Science editor S.K. Satheesh said the journal had considered the comments, consulted with a "senior expert" on the topic, and declined to publish his comments and to his request to withdraw the paper. BARC scientist and study lead author K.P. Singh also said Prof. Shirvan's comments "have no relevance to the main outcome of our study".

Dr. Kakodkar however said that given the performance of the HALEU-Th mix in U.S. labs and India's ambition to have 100 GW of nuclear energy by 2047, the country should move to "test" the fuel: "Now that we have the SHANTI agreement, why can't we use it for a bilateral collaboration?"

Mr. Shah said he considered Dr. Kakodkar "a mentor" (the name 'ANEEL' is a homage). Dr. Kakodkar also said he had no 'stake' in CCTE: "I'm retired but I consider it my mission that India should use thorium soon."

AEC member and former BARC scientist Ravi Grover however supported the study's conclusions: "These simulations are faithful to real world situations, so if the results say one thing, why should we at this stage conduct these [thorium] tests?" he asked.

R. Srikanth, an analyst of India's nuclear programme at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru, said HALEU-Th has emerged just as India is set to commission its 500-MWe fast breeder reactor in Kalpakkam, which will mark the start of the second stage of India's nuclear programme, to generate plutonium that will then feed into future thorium reactors, ultimately freeing India from using imported uranium.

"HALEU is commercially limited and expensive. Why should India replace its current import dependence on uranium with another dependence (HALEU)?" he asked. "Everything should be tested but we are at a delicate stage today and must allow our programme to unfold in its natural course. To advocate for the use of thorium in our current PHWR seems like a distraction."

Radioactive clash

India's long-term nuclear power programme is premised on being able to eventually harness its vast thorium reserves

Fuel concerns: An indigenous pressurised heavy water reactor under construction at Kakrapar, Gujarat, 2016. REETESH CHAURASIA (CC BY-SA)

- A study by BARC scientists concluded that the HALEU-Th fuel is unsuitable for India's current fleet of nuclear power reactors
- Leading scientists and a private firm with stake in the fuel's suitability have argued that the study contains technical flaws
- The BARC team reported that the fuel could significantly reduce the effectiveness of shutdown rods in existing pressurised heavy water reactors
- Anil Kakodkar advocated for testing HALEU-Th fuel to help India meet its ambitious nuclear energy goals
- Critics have expressed concerns that the new fuel might distract from India's three-stage nuclear power programme

When AI firms become power firms, who pays?

DECODED

John Xavier

It is rare for a policy announcement in Washington to feel like the real-time validation of a thought experiment I undertook. Yet that is precisely what happened last week when the Donald Trump administration unveiled the "Ratepayer Protection Pledge", urging America's largest artificial intelligence firms to build, or procure, their own electricity supply for the data centres that power AI.

The non-binding pledge asks hyperscalers like Alphabet, Microsoft, Amazon, Meta, Oracle, and xAI to pay the full cost of energy generation and grid upgrades required to run their facilities, rather than passing those costs on to ordinary consumers.

For anyone who has been modelling the economics of AI infrastructure, this proposal is striking. Interestingly, I ran a sort of Monte Carlo-style exercise examining Alphabet's "century bonds" in one of my earlier columns. One plausible long-term scenario from that exercise was hyperscalers slowly evolving into quasi-utility companies whose competitive advantage lies not only in algorithms and data but also in electricity generation, transmission, and physical compute capacity. The Trump administration's pledge seems to nudge the industry in that direction.

The reason is simple: AI is an energy revolution disguised as a technological revolution.

Training and running large AI models requires enormous computing clusters with thousands of GPUs operating continuously inside data centres that consume electricity at an industrial scale. In the U.S. alone, data centres currently account for roughly 4-5% of national electricity demand, and projections suggest this could rise to 9-17% by 2030.

Running large AI models requires enormous computing clusters with GPUs operating continuously inside data centres. REUTERS

That growth has triggered political backlash as communities hosting large data centres have complained about rising power bills and strained grids. This pledge is therefore as much a political gesture as an economic one. And, by the way, it is not binding and its operational details are sketchy at best. Still, the pledge signals something profound about the next phase of the AI race.

The constraint will no longer be about chips. It will be about energy.

If the pledge becomes reality, the hyperscalers may resemble a hybrid between a technology company and an independent power producer.

While the heads of these AI companies have signed a non-binding pledge to build and run their own electricity supply in the U.S., they are being aggressively courted by the Indian government with a tax holiday.

In the Union Budget earlier this year, the government announced a tax holiday until 2047 for foreign cloud providers that deliver global services through data centres located in India. The government's pitch fails to fully account for the downstream effects of such incentives.

In effect, India risks subsidising capital-intensive infrastructure whose largest resource costs will ultimately be borne by local ecosystems and public utilities.

Unlike the software companies India courted in the past, hyperscale data centres are heavy industrial facilities that consume gigawatts of electricity, enormous volumes of water for cooling, and large tracts of land.

Offering a multi-decade tax holiday to attract such facilities could place additional strain on already stressed urban ecosystems.

While Washington's approach – at least rhetorically – is that hyperscalers should eventually finance their own power supply, India's current approach appears to be the opposite: offering generous incentives without fully considering the potential toll on the country's infrastructure and resources. If AI is indeed becoming the next layer of global industrial infrastructure, the question India must confront is not merely how to attract data centres, but who will ultimately pay for the energy systems that sustain them.

SNAPSHOTS

Test disfavours acrylonitrile cells in Titan lakes

Computer models have suggested that acrylonitrile, an organic compound present on Saturn's moon Titan, can self-assemble into cell-like structures. When scientists mixed it with liquid methane and ethane in cryogenic conditions like those on Titan, they observed no signs of membrane formation. Instead, acrylonitrile interacted with ethane to form a stable cocrystal, suggesting acrylonitrile-based cell membranes are unlikely to exist in Titan's lakes.

New 'ecological' ways to vaccinate bats

Researchers have developed a vaccination strategy to stop viruses from jumping from bats to humans. Vaccinating wild bats is traditionally difficult. So first, they used irradiated mosquitoes as vaccine carriers. Bats developed immunity to rabies and Nipah viruses after eating mosquitoes or receiving bites. Second, the team built traps that exploited the bats' natural craving for salt, leading them to drinking vaccine-laced water. Both methods successfully protected bats in laboratory and simulated field tests.

Source of ripening bananas' unique scent found

Why do ripening bananas produce such a unique aroma? Scientists found that in ripening banana pulp, two enzymes, AHAS and IPMS, undergo alternative splicing: a process that creates shorter versions of the enzymes lacking usual regulatory parts, including their 'off' switches. Without them, the enzymes keep producing the chemical precursors of the fruit's signature scent. The process needing two enzymes to change together is why the banana aroma is so rare in nature.

Question Corner

A heavy price

Why can't anything travel faster than light and what would happen if it did?
– *Sai Karthikeya Duggirala*

Albert Einstein's equation $E = mc^2$ says energy and mass are linked. If you push an object to go faster, you add energy to it. At everyday speeds, this just increases the object's velocity. But as you approach the speed of light, the energy starts adding up to the object's effective mass instead. As the object becomes heavier, it also becomes harder to accelerate. To reach the actual speed of light, an object with mass would become infinitely heavy and require an infinite amount of energy to move. Since the universe contains a finite amount of energy, reaching light speed is impossible for anything made of matter. Because space and time are woven together, travelling faster than light in vacuum would likely mean travelling backwards in time. Physically, the laws of nature would break, creating paradoxes the universe currently prevents. It's possible to travel faster than light in a particular medium, e.g. electrons can outpace light in water. The limit is light's speed in vacuum.

Readers may send their questions / answers to science@thehindu.co.in

What is the Essential Commodities Act?

Why has the government invoked it? How will it help solve India's gas crisis? Which sectors will the order affect?

Priscilla Jebaraj

The story so far:

As the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz exposed the vulnerability of India's supply chain for cooking gas, the majority of which is imported, the Union government invoked the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. While long-term steps are needed to diversify and reduce reliance on global suppliers and expand strategic reserves, the Act is a crucial emergency tool for now. It allows the Centre to direct refiners to boost domestic LPG production, prioritise household consumption, and regulate the allocation of natural gas.

What is the Essential Commodities Act?

The Act empowers the Union government to control the production, supply, and distribution of commodities, including drugs, fertilizers, foodstuffs, edible oils, fuels, and seeds.

Under Section 3, the government can issue orders to maintain or increase supplies, to prioritise production of any essential commodity, or to secure their equitable distribution and availability at fair prices. It can set prices and stock limits, prevent sales, control storage, transport, and distribution, and prevent hoarding and black marketing.

In the recent past, the law has been invoked to manage shortages of wheat, sugar, and pulses. During the COVID-19 lockdown, it was invoked to prevent hoarding, black marketing, and profiteering of a range of goods.

The government claims that its order has already increased domestic production of LPG by at least 25%, though that still leaves a 50% gap in supplies to be met by imports

Why has it been invoked now?

Facing U.S. and Israeli strikes, Iran has retaliated by attacking oil-producing neighbours in the Persian Gulf that hosted U.S. forces, and targeting ships in the Strait of Hormuz. While a fifth of the world's oil transits through this maritime chokepoint, it is the disrupted supply of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), or cooking gas, that has sent Indian consumers into a panic.

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana helped to boost LPG coverage in Indian households from about 62% in 2016 to almost 100% now. However, domestic production has not kept up with consumption. In 2024-25, Indian refineries produced 12.8 million metric tonnes of LPG, just 41% of the annual consumption of 31.3 million tonnes (Petroleum Ministry data). The gap is filled by imports, of which a whopping 90% comes through the Strait of Hormuz.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is also piped into Indian kitchens, apart from fuelling vehicles, and being used for other commercial purposes. Of India's consumption of 189 million metric standard cubic meters per day, 52% is produced domestically. A quarter of the total consumption is imported from the Persian Gulf.

How does the order affect LPG production?

On March 5, the government ordered all oil refineries in India to channel their propane and butane streams into LPG production, rather than using them for petrochemical manufacturing. A revised order on March 9 specified that SEZ oil-refining companies and petrochemical complexes are also to be included. It added that propylene, butene, and other elements of the C3 and C4 streams were also to be used for LPG production only.

Apart from state-run refiners, such as Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum (HPCL), Chennai Petroleum, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, and the Numaligarh Refinery, the order is also directed at private refiners such as Reliance and Nayara Energy.

The government claims that its order has already increased domestic production of LPG by at least 25%, though that still leaves a 50% gap in supplies to be met by imports.

All LPG is to be supplied exclusively to IOCL, BPCL, and HPCL, which have been directed to supply cylinders only to domestic households. The de-prioritisation of commercial kitchens has already resulted in restaurants, hostels, and hotels downing shutters or limiting their menus.

How does this regulate natural gas supply?

The March 9 order on natural gas does not impact production, but rather establishes a priority-based allocation framework for gas distribution, overriding any existing contracts.

Top priority will go to piped natural gas for households, compressed natural gas for transport, gas needed for LPG production, and pipeline compressor fuel. Supplies to these sectors will be maintained at 100% of their average consumption over the past six months, subject to availability. Fertilizer manufacturers will get 70% of their needs, though this may change if the war continues to disrupt supplies as kharif sowing gets into full swing in summer. Supplies to tea, manufacturing, and other industries have been capped at 80%.

Some petrochemical facilities run by ONGC, GAIL, and Reliance will face partial or full curtailment of LNG supply. Gas allocation to oil refineries will drop to 65% of their usual needs.

How did the SC read the OBC creamy layer test?

How does the income/wealth test determine who falls under the OBC creamy layer? Why did the Court find the 2004 Department of Personnel and Training letter problematic in applying the test? Who will benefit from the latest judgment and how will it be implemented?

Abhinay Lakshman

The story so far:

On March 11, the Supreme Court ruled that parental income alone cannot be the sole determinant of whether an Other Backward Classes (OBC) candidate falls under the 'creamy layer' category. The judgment came in a case that was meant to clear decades-long confusion about how to apply the crucial income/wealth test prescribed in regulations, specifically for OBC candidates whose parents are officials of Central or State public sector undertakings (PSUs) or in private employment, where the equivalence of their posts had not yet been established with government posts.

Until PSU posts are equated with government service, OBC candidates must get a fair creamy layer assessment

What do government regulations say about determining the creamy layer among OBCs?

The concept of a creamy layer among OBCs was introduced following the 1992 Supreme Court ruling in the *Indra Sawhney* case, which paved the way for the implementation of reservations for OBCs. The idea was to exclude certain categories of OBC candidates whose families had accumulated social and economic privileges over the years, known as the creamy layer.

In order to clarify which categories of OBC candidates would fall under the creamy layer, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) prepared a guiding charter, in the form of an Office Memorandum (OM), issued in September 1993. This OM prescribed specific categories of OBC candidates who would not be entitled to the OBC quota. This included children of people holding constitutional positions such as the Offices of President and Vice-President; judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court; children of Class I and Class II officers directly recruited into either the Central or State government; and children of officers in the armed forces or paramilitary forces above a particular rank.

Besides this, the DoPT also prescribed a crucial income or wealth test, applicable to people in the salaried professional class or engaged in trade; people holding plantations, vacant land, and/or buildings in urban areas; and people whose parents were holding posts in Central or State PSUs where the equivalence of these posts with government service posts has not yet been established.

It is with respect to this last category of people – children of parents holding posts in Central or State PSUs where the equivalence of the posts with government service posts has not yet been established – that the Court delivered its recent judgment. The OBC candidates from this group, who were selected in civil service examinations from 2015 onwards, argued that the income/wealth test had been incorrectly applied to them, excluding them from the OBC quota.

The Supreme Court of India.

What is the income/wealth test?

Under the 1993 DoPT OM on the income/wealth test for OBC reservations, a candidate is considered part of the creamy layer if their parents have a gross annual income of ₹1 lakh or more, or possess wealth above the Wealth Tax Act, 1957, threshold for three consecutive years. The limit of ₹1 lakh, set in 1993, was revised multiple times and now stands at ₹8 lakh, the last revision having come in 2017.

Importantly, the 1993 DoPT OM noted that parental income from salaries or agricultural land should be excluded when applying the income/wealth test and only income from sources such as property, business, or capital gains should be considered.

However, in October 2004, the DoPT issued a letter meant to clarify issues that had arisen in interpreting the 1993 OM. In para 9 of this letter, the DoPT took up the issue of how to calculate the income for the income/wealth test for OBCs whose parents were in Central or State PSUs where equivalence of posts had not yet been established. The DoPT seemed to suggest that income from salaries was to be counted to determine if the income is above the ₹8 lakh per year threshold for three consecutive years.

In an October 2020 affidavit filed in the Supreme Court, the DoPT pointed to both the 1993 OM and the 2004 clarificatory letter, to state that it had different ways of applying the income/wealth test for different categories. However, it did not clearly explain in which cases income from salaries was to be included while applying the income/wealth test.

In the 2026 ruling, the Division Bench noted that until the government establishes equivalence between the posts of Central or State PSUs and government services, the income/wealth test must continue to apply equally.

What does the latest judgment say?

The judgment said OBC candidates of such PSU staffers cannot be denied a fair creamy layer evaluation because the government had yet to establish the equivalence of posts with government service. Regarding the 1993 OM and the income/wealth test, the Supreme Court noted that it "operates as a residual filter". It added that salary and agricultural incomes are consciously excluded when applying the test.

The Court found that while the 1993 OM was clear about not including income from salaries in the calculation for the income/wealth test, the 2004 letter had called for its inclusion. The Court said that a House Committee's conclusions that the 2004 clarificatory letter had obfuscated the issue were valid.

The Court went on to note that the interpretation of the 1993 OM, read with the 2004 letter, had led to "hostile discrimination" between the children of those in government service and those in PSUs or private employment. It said, "Treating the children of those employed in PSUs or private employment, etc., as being excluded from the benefit of reservation only on the basis of their income derived from salaries, and without reference to their posts (whether Group A or B, or Group C or D) would certainly lead to hostile discrimination between parties who are similarly placed and would amount to equals being treated unequally." It added, "Adopting an interpretation that disadvantages one segment of the same backward class without rational justification would amount to treating equals as unequals and would thus become the antithesis of equality, the corner stone of our Republic."

Who does the judgment apply to? Who will benefit from this?

The judgment, while providing relief to about 100 candidates who appeared for civil service exams since 2015 and had been denied the OBC quota, will apply to children of parents working in PSUs and in private employment. This means the ruling will effect not just candidates who appear in exams from now on, but also candidates who might have been selected in services in the years before, but not at the rank they would have been if their claim to the OBC quota had been allowed. The Court said that the appellants (the government) should create supernumerary posts, as required, so that candidates who qualify as non-creamy layer OBCs can obtain the reservation benefits they were previously denied, as long as they meet all other eligibility requirements.

Why did the SC allow passive euthanasia?

What test did the Supreme Court apply in the Harish Rana case to decide if continuing treatment was in his best interest? What nuanced distinction did it provide between active and passive euthanasia? What have been India's past positions on the right to die?

Krishnadas Rajagopal

The story so far:

On March 11, in India's first judicial approval of passive euthanasia, the Supreme Court allowed the withdrawal of life support for Harish Rana, 32, who had been in a vegetative state for nearly 13 years following a fall. The Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and K.V. Viswanathan said that medical boards and Mr. Rana's family had both said that treatment had become futile and was not in his best interest. It held that the right to life included the right to die with dignity.

The Court held that the right to live with dignity would include the right to die with dignity for a patient with an irreversible medical condition

What is passive euthanasia?

A simplistic view holds that passive euthanasia involves a negative act or an omission, such as withdrawing or withholding life support, while active euthanasia is an intrusion or positive act, such as administering a lethal injection. Active euthanasia is currently illegal in India.

However, the latest judgment helps us understand the difference in a more nuanced way. The Court noted that withdrawing life-sustaining treatment, such as switching off a ventilator, is a positive act. Relying on a simplistic 'act versus omission' test could wrongly place withdrawal of life support outside legal protections for passive euthanasia. Justice Pardiwala explained that the distinction lies in the source of harm: active euthanasia introduces a "new, external agency of harm, such as a lethal injection." Passive euthanasia does not involve a new risk of death, but the removal of an artificial barrier, which then allows the natural trajectory of life to continue and reach its inevitable conclusion. When a ventilator is withdrawn, death is "accelerated" only in the sense that the patient dies sooner than they would have if the machine had continued.

GETTY IMAGES/ ISTOCK PHOTO

What did the Court say about the 'right to die'?

The Court said there comes a point when even the state's interest in preserving life must yield to an individual's right to die with dignity. It said, "Temporarily keeping alive a terminally-ill patient who is brain dead or in a persistent vegetative state, solely because doctors are able to leverage the technological advancements in medicine, and compelling such patients to endure a slow, agonising death, cannot fully be compatible with the constitutional ideal of dignity." The Court observed that as the end of life approaches, a loss of control over human faculties denudes life of its meaning. It declared that the right to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution extends beyond the preservation of life to encompass the right to die with dignity for a patient with an irreversible medical condition.

The Court also remarked that the term 'passive euthanasia' is obsolete. It said the term 'euthanasia' in India would strictly refer only to active euthanasia. The usage 'withdrawing or withholding of medical treatment' would replace the term 'passive euthanasia'.

What is the 'best interests' test?

The test is based on the common law principle that any medical treatment constitutes a trespass against the person and must always be justified. The 'best interests' inquiry does not ask whether it is in the patient's best interest to die, but whether continuing life support through Clinically Assisted Nutrition and Hydration, as was done in Mr. Rana's case, artificially serves their best interest. The Supreme Court said there is no narrow, straight-jacket formula to understand what would be in the best interest of an unconscious or incompetent patient; that would require both medical and non-medical considerations. The Court explained that, at its core, the 'best interests' inquiry is anchored in a strong presumption in favour of preserving life, reflecting the sanctity of life. But this presumption was not absolute and may be displaced when medical treatment artificially and futilely prolongs the suffering of a patient with an irreversible medical condition.

What have been the past positions in India on the 'right to die'?

The Supreme Court and the Law Commission of India have often addressed the right to die. In 1996, in *Gian Kaur v. State of Punjab*, a Constitution Bench distinguished between an attempt to suicide and abetment of suicide from "acceleration of the process of natural death". It held that the right to live with dignity also includes the right of a patient to die with dignity when life was already ebbing out.

In 2006, the 196th Law Commission of India Report recommended that a terminally ill patient's decision to discontinue medical treatment should not attract criminal liability if such withdrawal was in their best interests.

In 2011, the tragic case of the nurse, Aruna Shanbaug, in Maharashtra, saw the Supreme Court grapple with questions on the right to die amid a legislative vacuum. It prompted the Court to draw guidance from comparative jurisprudence and foreign legal frameworks. The Court then laid down guidelines permitting withholding of medical treatment for terminally ill patients with no chance of recovery.

A year later, the Law Commission, in its 241st Report, reiterated its 2006 suggestions. Four years later, the Health Ministry published a draft law, The Medical Treatment of Terminally-Ill Patients (Protection of Patients and Medical Practitioners) Bill, 2016, but no follow-up has been made in the past decade.

In 2018, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, in *Common Cause v. Union of India,* laid down fresh guidelines detailing procedures, including constitution of medical boards, to deal with applications for withdrawal of life support and advanced medical directives (AMDs). The need for judicial intervention arose in the absence of law. One of the judges on the Bench expressed a "pious hope" that Parliament would wake up to enact a specific law.

In 2023, the Court intervened again to simplify the procedure for AMDs. In June 2024, the government released guidelines on withdrawal of life support for public consultations. However, no action has followed.

PROFILES

The cleric with a gun

Mojtaba Khamenei

A wounded man who lost his parents and wife, and was elected the 'Supreme Leader' of a nation under attack from the world's most powerful country and its closest ally, the ayatollah now faces a rare crisis his predecessors never confronted — to survive the storm and preserve the republic

Stanly Johny

"I assure everyone that we will not forgo vengeance for the blood of your martyrs," Ayatollah Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei, Iran's new 'Leader of the Revolution' (Rahbar Enghelab), said on March 12, in his first public comment after his elevation to the country's most powerful office. "The vengeance we have in mind is not limited to the martyrdom of the great leader of the Revolution," the 56-year-old cleric said, referring to the assassination of his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, on February 28 by a U.S.-Israeli joint strike. "Rather, every member of the nation who is martyred by the enemy constitutes an independent subject in the file of vengeance," he said in a statement issued in Farsi.

The younger Khamenei was at Ali Khamenei's residence in Tehran when it was struck on the first day of the ongoing war. He lost his father, who had been Iran's rahbar for 37 years, as well as his mother and his wife, along with other top officials of the Islamic Republic. "He [Mojtaba] was there and he was injured in his legs and hand and arm... in the bombardment," Iran's Ambassador to Cyprus, Alireza Salarian, later said. Yousef Pezeshkian, son of President Masoud Pezeshkian, wrote in a social media post on March 11 that Mojtaba was injured "but safe and sound".

A wounded man who lost his parents and wife and was elected the 'Supreme Leader' of a nation under attack from the world's most powerful country and its closest ally, Mojtaba Khamenei now faces a rare crisis his predecessors never confronted – to survive the storm and preserve the republic.

War and faith

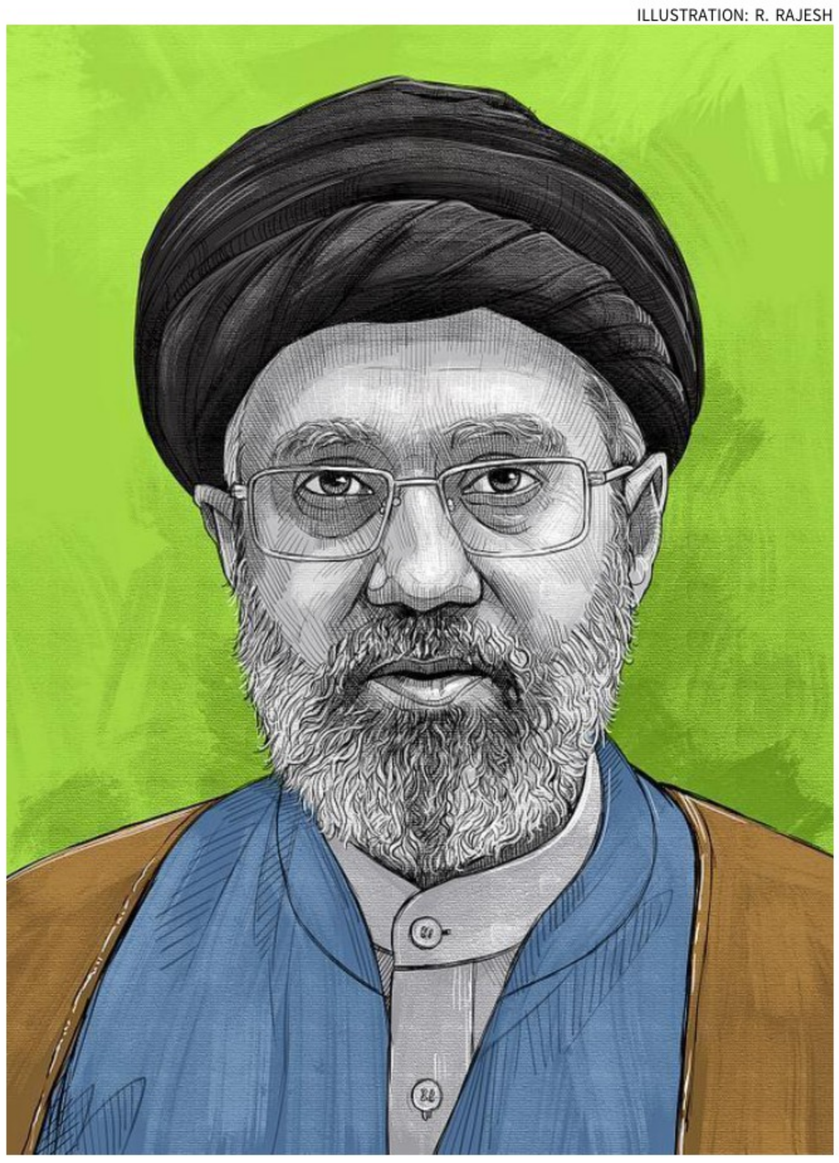
Born in 1969 in the Shia holy city of Mashhad, Mojtaba grew up in the Shah's Iran. His father was one of the figureheads of the clerical opposition towards Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. In the years before the 1979 revolution, Ali Khamenei, along with Abbas Vaez-Tabasi and Sayyed Abdolkarim Hasheminejad, two other clerics, formed a leadership council to organise protests and political activities in Mashhad against the Shah's rule. After the revolution, Ali Khamenei became a Deputy Defence Minister in the revolutionary government. Hasheminejad was assassinated in 1981. Vaez-Tabasi would go on to hold key positions in the clerical establishment of the republic until his death in 2016.

Mojtaba, who was nine at the time of the revolution, moved to Tehran with his family. He attended Alavi High School, a prominent private religious school in central Tehran. In 1987, at 17, Mojtaba joined the armed forces to fight the war against Iraq. According to an official documentary of his life, he served during the war "as a simple Basij". The Basij, a paramilitary volunteer organisation, is one of the key branches of the Islamic Republic's security apparatus.

Ayatollah Khomeini accepted a ceasefire with Iraq in 1988, which he compared to "drinking poison". After his death in 1989, Ali Khamenei was chosen as the second rahbar. Mojtaba started his religious studies in Qom after the war. One of his early teachers was Sayyed Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, who would later become Iran's judiciary chief. In 1999, he went back to Qom for advanced theological studies. In the city of seminaries, he joined the ranks of clerics along with Mesbah Yazdi, a scholar, 'principalist' (hardliner) and a member of the Assembly of Experts (from 1999 to 2016); and Ayatollah Lotfollah Safi Golpayegani, the first Secretary-General of the Guardian Council in the 1980s. By 2004, Mojtaba started teaching 'Kharij-e Feqh' (advanced jurisprudence), according to the official biography. It says he is fluent in Farsi, Arabic and English and has completed specialised studies in psychology and psychoanalysis.

Even though Mojtaba never held a constitutional position, he emerged as a key pillar of Iran's clerical establishment and an ally of the security wing during the long period of his father's reign. "Ayatollah Mojtaba maintained strong ties with figures associated with the Axis of Resistance," reads a profile of the cleric on Press TV's website. He was very close to Qassem Soleimani, the charismatic Quds Force commander who was assassinated by the U.S. in January 2020 in Baghdad.

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH



In November 2019, when the U.S. Treasury Department imposed sanctions on Mojtaba, one of the reasons it listed was the younger Khamenei's close ties with the Quds Force and Basij. "Mojtaba Khamenei is designated today for representing the Supreme Leader in an official capacity despite never being elected or appointed to a government position. The Supreme Leader has delegated a part of his leadership responsibilities to Mojtaba Khamenei, who worked closely with the commander of the IRGC-Quds Force [who at that time was headed by Soleimani] and also Basij to advance his father's destabilising regional ambitions and oppressive domestic objectives," read the Treasury statement.

A biography on PBS claimed that Mojtaba was a friend of Saeed Emami, a Deputy Intelligence Minister and one of the most powerful security commissars in Iran in the 1990s. Emami was accused of running death squads that hunted down anti-revolutionary units abroad (the so-called 'chain murders' of the 1990s). Brigadier Gen. Sayyed Mohammad Hejazi, a veteran of the Iran-Iraq war and a former Basij commander, was also considered a close aide of Mojtaba. These relationships helped him maintain his influence over the IRGC, Quds Force, Basij and intelligence networks over the years.

He had also faced allegations of meddling in the political process. In 2005, Mahdi Karroubi, a former speaker of Majles and a reformist candidate in the 2005 presidential election, wrote to Ali Khamenei, saying Mojtaba had interfered in the elections and supported and campaigned for one candidate (he was referring to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad). Ali Khamenei rejected the accusations. In 2009, after the disputed elections sparked protests in Iran, Basij cracked down on the demonstrations. Mojtaba had backed Ahmadinejad's reelection.

In recent years, he had been widely rumoured as a potential successor to his father. An Ayatollah who cut his teeth in the Iran-Iraq war, a teacher from Qom who effortlessly navigates the power corridors of Iran's theocracy, military establishment, and fractious polity, Mojtaba, who always largely avoided international media attention, was seen by many as a natural candidate. Yet, the core idea of the Islamic revolution was explicitly opposed to dynastic rule. Hereditary succession was "sinister", "evil" and "invalid", which had "no place in Islam," Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, founder of the Islamic Republic, once wrote. Ali Khamenei himself had never publicly suggested that Mojtaba could succeed him.

But in a moment of crisis, members of Iran's 88-member Assembly of Experts picked Mojtaba, sending a clear message of continuity and defiance. After killing Ali Khamenei, U.S. President Donald Trump had said Mojtaba would not be acceptable to him. After his appointment, Mojtaba vowed revenge, saying the war would not be over unless enough enemy blood was shed. "He would strike the [enemy] lines heroically," says a commander in the official documentary about the rahbar.

THE GIST

- In 1987, at 17, Mojtaba Khamenei joined the armed forces to fight the war against Iraq. According to an official documentary of his life, he served during the war 'as a simple Basij'
- Even though Mojtaba never held a constitutional position, he emerged as a key pillar of Iran's clerical establishment and an ally of the security wing during the long period of his father's reign
- After his appointment as Iran's leader, Mojtaba vowed revenge, saying the war would not be over unless enough enemy blood was shed

The pearl of the Persian Gulf

Kharg Island

The U.S. strike on the island, which handles up to 90% of Iran's crude exports, could further destabilise the global energy market, pumping up prices

Smriti Sudesh

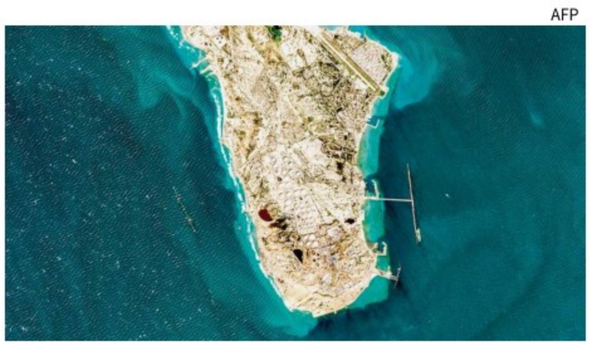
A U.S. attack has "totally obliterated every military target" on Kharg Island, Iran's crown jewel in the Persian Gulf, said President Donald Trump in a social media post on March 14. The strike came after Mr. Trump's earlier warning to Iran not to shut the Strait of Hormuz, a critical maritime checkpoint connecting the Gulf with the Arabian Sea. The strait remains effectively closed.

As the U.S.-Israel war on Iran enters its second week, Kharg Island is now at the centre of the conflict. The tiny coral outpost in the Gulf sits at the centre of Iran's oil export network.

Barely 8 km long and covering about 20 sq. km, the island rises from the northern Persian Gulf as a small island, about 25-30 km off Iran's mainland coast. It sits in the turquoise waters of the Gulf. The landscape is dominated not by nature but by industry: massive storage tanks, sprawling jetties and an airstrip cutting across the island.

Jalal Al-e-Ahmad, the celebrated 20th century Iranian writer and philosopher, once described Kharg as the "orphan pearl" of the Persian Gulf. Today, many Iranians term it the "forbidden Island" because of the tight military restrictions surrounding it. Guarded by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), entry is limited to those with official clearance.

AFP



Kharg has long been part of regional trade networks. Ancient records from around the 10th century describe it as a stop for pearl divers and traders travelling between India and Basra, Iraq. Dutch merchants fortified the island in the 18th century before being driven out, and the British briefly occupied it in the 19th. Unlike most of Iran's coastline, where shallow waters make it difficult for large tankers to dock, Kharg has deep waters and long jetties that allow multiple ships to load oil at the same time. Its oil terminal was built in the late 1950s with help from the American company Amoco.

The island soon became Iran's main export hub for two key reasons. It could be connected by pipeline to the major oil fields of south-western Iran, and its deep-water location meant it was one of the few places where the new generation of supertankers could dock easily. After the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the facilities were nationalised. During the Iran-Iraq War in 1980-88, Saddam Hussain's forces repeatedly bombed the island's oil terminal, but Iran rebuilt it and kept exports flowing.

Export hub

Up to 90% of Iran's crude exports pass through the Kharg Island terminal. Oil from Iran's largest producing fields, such as Ahvaz, Marun and Gachsaran travels via pipeline to the Kharg island before being loaded onto tankers that sail through the Strait of Hormuz and into global markets.

Kharg typically handles between 1.3 and 1.6 million barrels of oil a day. In the weeks before the U.S. and Israel launched the war on Iran, exports briefly surged close to three million barrels a day. The island can load up to a maximum of seven million barrels a day and store roughly 30 million barrels at a time.

Most of that oil now goes to one country: China. China has emerged as the largest buyer of Iranian crude, importing more than 80% of the country's oil exports. Iran earned $35.76 billion from oil exports in 2024, with China accounting for over 90% of that. Whoever controls the island effectively controls the main outlet for Iran's oil.

The idea of targeting Kharg Island is not new, it has long been part of Mr. Trump's thinking. Nearly 40 years ago, he suggested striking Iran's main oil-export hub if tensions escalated. "I'd be harsh on Iran," he told The Guardian in 1988. "One bullet shot at one of our men or ships, and I'd do a number on Kharg Island. I'd go in and take it."

The attack on Kharg could cripple the global supply, potentially pushing prices even higher. On Friday, Brent crude traded at $103.8 a barrel, up from $73 before the war broke out. Iran had earlier warned that any strike on the island would trigger swift retaliation. The war now appears set to escalate further – bad news for the global energy market and consumers.

Trump's whisperer of war

Lindsey Graham

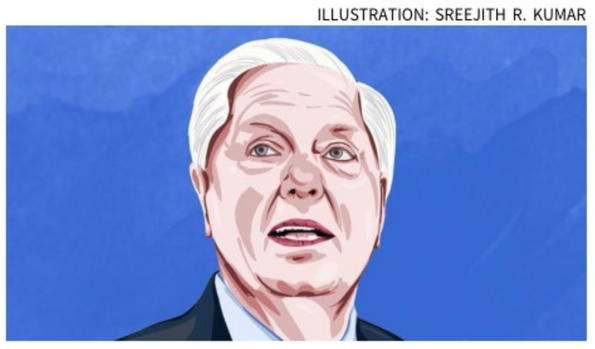
The South Carolina Senator, one of the strongest supporters of Trump's wars, says the U.S. is 'in a religious war and I unapologetically stand with Israel'

Varghese K. George

In 2015, a survey found 30% of Republican primary voters and 19% of Democratic primary voters supported bombing Agrabah – the fictional city from the Disney film Aladdin. Among the supporters of Donald J. Trump, the enthusiasm was sharper still: 41% were in favour, and only 9% opposed. This was when Mr. Trump was talking endlessly against America's endless wars as a Republican candidate for President. War enthusiasts in the U.S. cannot find a more effective voice than South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham. Credited with the feat of steering Mr. Trump into attacking Iran alongside Israel, Mr. Graham is not stopping. "Cuba is next," he said, soon after the U.S.-Israel axis started bombing Iran. He has also warned Saudi Arabia and Spain, two allies, of consequences if they do not stay in tune with U.S. war plans.

Mr. Graham thinks bombing all the "bad guys" around the world is America's manifest destiny. Speaking at the Republican Jewish Coalition Annual Leadership Summit in late 2025, he said: "I feel good about the Republican Party. I feel good about where we're going as a nation. We're killing all the right people, and we're cutting your taxes. Trump is my favourite President."

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR



At 70, Mr. Graham is not done yet. He travelled several times to Tel Aviv in the weeks before the war, meeting with Mossad. *Wall Street Journal* reported that he spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during these trips, "coaching him on how to lobby the President for action". Mr. Netanyahu then showed Mr. Trump intelligence that "persuaded him to go ahead", Mr. Graham told the *Journal*. If there is no particular U.S. interest involved in a war, there is always a god to invoke. "We're in a religious war and I unapologetically stand with Israel," he posted on X. American media is parading him from channel to channel, where he holds forth on the beauty and duty of wars. Mr. Graham is a Southern Baptist from South Carolina, a State where evangelical Christianity is as much cultural bedrock as political identity.

Mr. Graham had lampooned Mr. Trump in 2015, when the latter dropped onto the Republican stage, upstaging party orthodoxy on all things, particularly forever wars. "You know how you make America great again?" Mr. Graham asked on CNN that December. "Tell Donald Trump to go to hell." At the Republican primary debates, he called Mr. Trump "a racebaiting, xenophobic, religious bigot." At a Washington press dinner, he put on a Trump hat, called his own party "crazy", and pronounced Mr. Trump "just generally a loser as a person and a candidate".

Two-men club

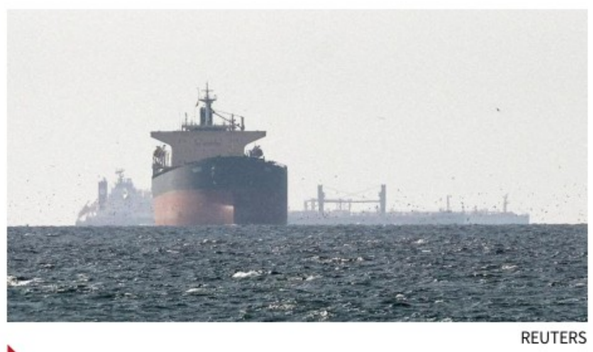
Mr. Trump returned the compliment with equal passion and flourish. Once Mr. Trump captured the Republican Party, Mr. Graham worked with the singleminded objective of capturing his mind. What goes on behind the scenes is, of course, behind the scenes, but flattery and sycophancy are in full public display. After Mr. Trump launched Operation Epic Fury, Mr. Graham went on Fox News to declare: "Donald J. Trump saved the world from real chaos. Thank God Trump did this. In turn, Mr. Trump is giving his complete backing to Mr. Graham's re-election bid for the Senate in the midterm elections in November. It is now a club of two old men – promoting each other and promoting war.

Mr. Graham is open about war as an enterprise of capturing resources and land – a logic that Mr. Trump, a real estate developer by profession, finds entirely congenial. When he was told Iran war was costing a billion dollars a day, Mr. Graham told an anchor: "Best money ever spent... When this regime goes down, we're going to have a new Middle East, and we're going to make a ton of money." He also pointed that Venezuela and Iran have 31% of the world's oil reserves. "We're going to have a partnership with 31% of the known reserves."

War is the present and, for Mr. Graham, the future. When asked what comes next, his answer is not peace, not reconstruction, not diplomacy – it is escalation. "This is a moment of world history," he said in an interview. "Just jump in the deep end of the pool."

WASHINGTON

‘Many countries’ to send warships to keep Hormuz open, says Trump



REUTERS

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Saturday that many countries would send warships to keep the Strait of Hormuz open for shipping, but did not provide details on which countries would do so. Mr. Trump said he hoped that China, France, Japan, South Korea, Britain and others would send ships to the area. REUTERS

HAVANA

Protesters attack Communist Party office in Cuba in riot over blackouts

REUTERS

Anti-government protesters attacked a Communist Party office in central Cuba early on Saturday, a state-run newspaper reported, in a rare outburst of public dissent triggered by blackouts. Videos showed a large fire and people throwing rocks through the windows of a building as voices shouted “liberty”. REUTERS

TOKYO

U.S. says it can provide ‘reliable’ energy supply to the Asia-Pacific

REUTERS

The United States can provide “reliable” energy supplies to Asia-Pacific, Interior Secretary Doug Burgum said on Saturday. President Trump’s “energy dominance” policy aims to ensure that “we have energy to allow for prosperity at home, and we have the ability to sell energy to our friends and allies,” Mr. Burgum said. AFP

JERUSALEM

Anti-Semitism up in Netherlands, says Israel after Jewish school blast

REUTERS

Israel’s Foreign Ministry said on Saturday that “an anti-Semitism epidemic is raging” in the Netherlands, after an overnight blast outside a Jewish school in Amsterdam. An overnight explosion against an exterior wall of a Jewish school in Amsterdam caused no injuries, and authorities have opened an investigation into it. AFP

Tehran hits Fujairah as Israel says Iran war entering ‘decisive phase’

Iran’s military warns UAE civilians to avoid port areas while Qatar intercepts missiles over Doha, marking Iran’s first open threats to non-U.S. assets; first 6 days cost U.S. $11.3 billion; Trump says Iran ‘totally defeated’, seeking a deal which he rejects

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Israel said the war against Iran was entering its “decisive phase” on Saturday, as explosions rocked cities across the West Asia.

Millions have been displaced by waves of drone, missile and aerial bombing, while more than 1,200 people have reportedly been killed in Iran, with little sign of the conflict slowing as it entered its third week.

Clouds of black smoke rose on Saturday over Fujairah, home to a major Emirati oil storage and export terminal, shortly after Iran’s military warned UAE civilians to avoid port areas. This is the first time Iran openly threatened a neighbouring country’s non-U.S. assets.

Escalating tensions: Fire and plumes of smoke rise from an oil facility in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, on Saturday. AP

Israel’s Defence Minister Israel Katz said the strikes on Kharg showed the war was entering a “decisive phase”, though he cautioned it would “continue as long as necessary”.

Yet, despite facing superior U.S. and Israeli firepower, Iran appears determined to fight on.

Blasts were heard over Jerusalem on Saturday after the army detected missiles fired from Iran. Iran has launched missile and drone attacks against at least 10 of its neighbours.

Qatar said it intercepted two missiles over the capital’s downtown area and evacuated key areas after blasts were heard in Doha.

Strikes continue in Iran, with heavy blasts shaking Tehran late Friday and local media reporting strikes in several provinces through Saturday. Israel’s army warned people in an industrial zone of Tabriz in northern Iran to evacuate, signalling an imminent attack.

Mr. Trump described Iran as “totally defeated” and in search of a deal he was unwilling to consider.

More than 15,000 targets in Iran have been hit by the U.S. and Israel in two weeks, the Pentagon said.

A report this week said the first six days alone cost the U.S. $11.3 billion and it has lost 13 military personnel.

Iran’s rulers appear intent on showing they will survive the war and maintain control, despite their supreme leader Ali Khamenei being killed on day one.

Khamenei’s son Mojtaba Khamenei was named the new Supreme Leader, but has been absent from public view and is reportedly wounded.

Iran’s Revolutionary Guards have threatened a heavy crackdown on any anti-government protests. Thousands were killed in mass protests in January.

Israel presses strikes as Lebanon says 26 killed

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Israel kept up strikes on Lebanon on Saturday as Beirut said 26 paramedics had been killed since the latest war erupted between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah this month.

French President Emmanuel Macron said the Lebanese government was ready to engage in “direct talks” with Israel and offered to host negotiations in Paris, warning that “everything must be done to prevent Lebanon from descending into chaos”.

Lebanon was dragged into the West Asia war last week when militant group Hezbollah attacked Israel in response to the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in U.S.-Israeli strikes. Hezbollah’s leader Naim Qassem said on Friday that his group was ready for a long confrontation with Israel, calling the current conflict an “existential battle”.

An Israeli artillery unit deployed at a position in the upper Galilee in northern Israel fires towards southern Lebanon on Saturday. AFP

Israel’s military said it had struck “approximately 110 Hezbollah command centres” since the regional conflict broke out.

Lebanese health authorities said an overnight Israeli strike killed 12 doctors, paramedics and nurses working at a healthcare centre in the southern town of Burj Qalawiya.

The Israeli army said that it struck Hezbollah operatives “who were bringing rockets into a weapons depot” in Majedel.

Lebanon’s Health Ministry accused Israel of repeatedly “targeting ambulance crews while they were performing rescue duties”, while the Israeli military accused Hezbollah of using ambulances militarily.

Faithful resistance

Shia Muslims burn an effigy of Baal during a gathering marking the annual al-Quds Day in Baghdad, Iraq, on Friday. Al-Quds Day is observed on the last Friday of the month of Ramzan, in solidarity with Palestinians and opposition to Israeli control over Jerusalem. REUTERS

Jürgen Habermas, German philosopher, dies aged 96

Associated Press
BERLIN

Jürgen Habermas, whose work on communication, rationality and sociology made him one of the world’s most influential philosophers and a key intellectual figure in his native Germany, has died. He was 96.

Habermas’ publisher, Suhrkamp, said he died on Saturday in Starnberg, near Munich.

Habermas frequently weighed in on political matters over several decades. His extensive writing crossed the boundaries of academic and philosophical disciplines, providing a vision of modern society and social interaction. His best-known works included the two-volume *Theory of Communicative Action*.

Jürgen Habermas

Habermas, who was 15 at the time of Nazi Germany’s defeat, later recalled the dawn of a new era in 1945 and his coming to terms with the reality of Nazi crimes as something without which he wouldn’t have found his way into philosophy and social theory. He recalled that “you saw suddenly that it was a politically criminal system in which you had lived”.

He had an ambivalent relationship with the left-wing student movement of the late 1960s in Germany and beyond, engaging with it but also warning at the time against the danger of what he called “left-wing fascism” – a reaction to a firebrand speech by a student leader that he later said was “slightly out of place”. He would later recognise the movement as having driven a “fundamental liberalisation” of German society.

Chancellor Friedrich Merz said that “Germany and Europe have lost one of the most significant thinkers of our time.”

Germany’s centre-right leader said that “his sociological and philosophical work had an impact on generations of researchers and thinkers”. Mr. Merz praised “Habermas’ intellectual forcefulness and his liberality” and said in a statement that “his voice will be missed”.

Hamas urges key ally Iran to stop attacking Gulf nations

Agence France-Presse
GAZA CITY

Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas on Saturday called on Iran to refrain from targeting neighbouring countries, while affirming Tehran’s right to defend itself against Israel and the United States.

In a rare appeal, Hamas also urged the international community to take steps to end the war that has gripped West Asia since it began on February 28.

“While affirming the right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond to this aggression by all available means in accordance with international norms and laws, the movement calls on the brothers in Iran to avoid targeting neighbouring countries,” Hamas said in a statement.

Russian strike on Kyiv region kills 4 and wounds at least 15

Associated Press
KYIV

A combined missile and drone attack on the Kyiv region killed at least four persons and wounded at least 15 overnight into Saturday, according to the head of the regional administration.

Three of the wounded were in critical condition, of whom two were undergoing surgery, Mykola Kalashnyk reported on Saturday. The attack hit four districts, damaging residential buildings, educational institutions, enterprises and critical infrastructure, Mr. Kalashnyk added in a social media post.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the main target for the overnight strikes was “the energy infrastructure of the Kyiv region”. He said Russia launched around 430 drones of various types during the night, as well as 68 missiles.

Russia’s Defence Ministry on Saturday said the nighttime strikes targeted energy and industrial facilities serving Ukraine’s armed forces, as well as military airfields.

Elsewhere, Ukrainian drones struck an oil refinery and a port overnight in Russia’s southern Krasnodar region, causing injuries and damage, local authorities said.

In a statement on Telegram, Krasnodar authorities said three persons had been injured in a strike on Port Kavkaz, which ships grains and LPG.

Rajasthan State Road Development And Construction Corporation Ltd., JAIPUR

No. : NIT/2025-26/40340-49 Date : 13/03/2026

अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 772/2025-26

निम्नलिखित परियोजनाओं पर पथकर वसूली हेतु ई-टेन्डरिंग प्रक्रिया से ऑनलाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

कार्य का विवरण	कार्य की कुल अनुमानित लागत (रु.)
Selection of Bidder for Collection of User Fee on the basis of competitive bidding through e-procurement basis for the following:-	
On Kota-Sangod BOT Road for a period of 01 Year. UBN : RRC2526SLOB01306	796.823 Lakh

निविदा से सम्बन्धित प्रपत्र में निविदा शुल्क, धरोहर राशि, डाउनलोड करने व खोलने की तारीख सहित सम्पूर्ण विवरण एवं संशोधन वेबसाईट: http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.rajasthan.nic.in तथा http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in/rsrdc पर देखा जा सकता है। इच्छुक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेबसाईट http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर रजिस्टर्ड करवाना आवश्यक है। महाप्रबंधक

DIPR/C/5151/2026

OFFICE OF THE MEMBER SECRETARY, RAJASTHAN MEDICARE RELIEF SOCIETY, PRINCE BIJAY SINGH MEMORIAL (P.B.M.) & ASSOCIATED GROUP OF HOSPITALS, BIKANER

No.RMRS/PBM/2025-26/7875 Date:- 6/3/26

Bid Corrigendum Notice

Notice inviting E-bid (SOENIB No. 21, 22/2025-26)

BIDS FOR THE SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, OPERATION & MAINTENANCE OF **3.0 TESLA MRI MACHINE (1 unit) & 128 Slice (or more) CT- SCAN MACHINE- (02 Units)** ALONG WITH PROVIDING INVESTIGATION RELATED SERVICES ON REVENUE SHARING BISIS ON PPP MODE FOR RMRS PBM HOSPITAL, BIKANER DATES ARE REVISED AS FOLLOWS.

क्र.स.	पूर्व की तिथि	संशोधित तिथि
1	ऑन लाईन बोली प्रस्तुत करने की अन्तिम तिथि व समय एवं बोली प्रतिभूति राशि, बोली शुल्क आर.आई.एस.एस. शुल्क कार्यालय में भौतिक रूप से (ऑफ लाईन) प्रस्तुत करने की अन्तिम दिनांक व समय 09.03.2026 दोपहर 1.00 बजे	ऑन लाईन बोली प्रस्तुत करने की अन्तिम तिथि व समय एवं बोली प्रतिभूति राशि, बोली शुल्क आर.आई.एस.एस. शुल्क कार्यालय में भौतिक रूप से (ऑफ लाईन) प्रस्तुत करने की अन्तिम दिनांक व समय 03.04.2026 दोपहर 1.00 बजे
2	तकनीकी बोली खुलने की दिनाक व समय 10.03.2026 दोपहर 4.00 बजे	तकनीकी बोली खुलने की दिनाक व समय 09.04.2026 दोपहर 4.00 बजे

Member Secretary
Rajasthan Medicare Relief Society,
Prince Bijay Singh Memorial
(PBM) AG Hospital, Bikaner

भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान भोपाल
(शिक्षा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार द्वारा स्थापित)
Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal
(Estb. by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)

Advt. No.: IISERB/DOAA/2026/01 March 15, 2026

Admission for Academic Year 2026-27

Applications are invited for the semester commencing from August 2026.

Programmes	Disciplines
Ph.D. National/ International Students	**Natural Sciences Stream:** Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Mathematics, Physics. **Engineering Sciences Stream:** Chemical Engineering, Data Science and Engineering (DSE), Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS). **Humanities and Social Sciences Stream:** Economic Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS).
Integrated Ph.D.	**Natural Sciences Stream:** Mathematics and Physics.
MA Programme	**Humanities and Social Sciences Stream:** Liberal Arts Programme.

Details of qualification, eligibility, application form and application procedure are available on **https://www.iiserb.ac.in/admission**

Last Date for Submission of Application: April 13, 2026
(Updates, if any, shall be notified on the Institute website)

अधिष्ठाता शैक्षणिक

M BG-BGE

HANDS FULL

Won't be able to serve as DC's mentor this season: Pietersen

FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Kevin Pietersen, who mentored Delhi Capitals last year, said that he will not be able to serve the role in the upcoming IPL. "I cannot be the mentor for Delhi Capitals this IPL season. I cannot give the time that the job requires. Best wishes to all the players for this season!" Pietersen said on *X* in a post written in Hindi.

IN FINE SHAPE

Mumbai Indians should use Rohit for full 40 overs, reckons Chopra

FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

Aakash Chopra believes that Mumbai Indians should use Rohit Sharma for the full 40 overs instead of employing him as an Impact Player in the upcoming IPL season. Chopra noted that Rohit is "the fittest" he has ever been in his life. "Logically, if you are fit, you should play the whole game and not be substituted".

WEAVING A STORY

Knight Riders launch jersey with 'Lines of Legacy' campaign

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Kolkata Knight Riders unveiled its jersey for IPL 2026, designed in the theme of 'Lines of Legacy'. The concept draws inspiration from defining moments that have shaped KKR's journey. Each moment forms a line in the team's story, and when the lines come together, they create the initials KKR in the style of abstract linear art.

IN ELITE CLUB

Mayank becomes India's 94th GM and the first from Assam

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mayank Chakraborty has become India's 94th Grandmaster and the first from Assam. The 16-year-old achieved the title at the Hotel Stockholm North by First Hotels Chess Talents tournament, which he won (with seven points from nine rounds). The performance enabled Mayank cross the 2500 Elo rating required to become a GM.

England makes India pay for missed opportunities

Baldson opens the scoring off a penalty corner before Neal doubles the lead in the third quarter as the European side emerges champion; the home team suffers second straight loss in a final

WWC QUALIFIERS

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

England made the most of its opportunities while India paid the price for missed chances as the former clinched the gold medal at the FIH Women's Hockey World Cup Qualifiers. In Saturday's final at the G.M.C. Balayogi Stadium here, England defeated the host 2-0 to emerge victorious.

Having the last laugh: England dashed India's hopes of a triumph on home soil. NAGARA GOPAL

Bright start

India responded to head coach Sjoerd Marijne's prematch call for an aggressive approach and began brightly. Within the opening minute, Suchila Chanu's aerial ball found Navneet Kaur inside the circle, and her shot struck Flora Peel's foot. India reviewed the decision and earned its first penalty corner.

However, Miriam Pritchard denied Navneet's attempt with a fine goal-line save.

Sunelita Toppo and Navneet then combined neatly before the latter slipped a clever no-look pass to Lalremsiami, who failed to connect cleanly with her shot. India controlled possession despite England's high press but struggled to find the decisive final pass. The visitor, meanwhile, made sure to test goalkeeper Bichu Devi Kharibam whenever possible.

In the 12th minute, Sophie Hamilton fired a shot that Bichu Devi blocked with her left foot.

Despite India's positive start, England took the lead a minute later.

Bingham won a penalty corner and Grace Balsdon converted with a low strike that beat Bichu Devi, with Navneet unable to intervene on the goal line.

India nearly drew level early in the second quarter when Lalremsiami drove into the circle from the left and set up Ishika, whose shot narrowly missed the far post. At the other end, England briefly thought it had doubled its lead through Anna Toman from a penalty corner. But the goal was ruled out for dangerous play.

India continued to press and win possession in the midfield but lacked composure inside the circle. England gradually asserted control toward the end of the first half, though the home team defended resolutely.

Dazzling dribble

Navneet produced a dazzling dribble in the 42nd minute that momentarily lifted the crowd, but Ishika and Lalremsiami were unable to trouble the goalkeeper.

A minute later, England extended its lead when Elizabeth Neal's shot took a deflection off Manisha's foot and sailed into the net.

England dominated the final quarter, pinning India back in its own half. The host defended in numbers to prevent further damage.

In the larger context, the sting of a second successive final defeat – following the 2025 Asia Cup – will be somewhat softened by the fact that World Cup qualification had already been secured comfortably.

The result:

England 2 (Grace Baldson 13-pc, Elizabeth Neal 43) bt India 0.

Best State for Promotion of Sports honour underlines Bihar's growth

Amul Presents SPORTSTAR ACES 2026 #IndiaTriumphs Co-presented by CASAGRAND In Association with SRM

Warm welcome: M.M. Somaya, *Sportstar* Aces Awards jury member, extending an invitation to Bihar CM Nitish Kumar and Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Just reward: Bihar Sports Minister Shreyasi Singh and Director General of the Bihar State Sports Authority Raveendran Sankaran receive the honour from jury member Aparna Popat and LIC MD & CEO R. Doraiswamy. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Sports Bureau
MUMBAI

Bihar was honoured as the Best State for Promotion of Sports at the *Sportstar* Aces 2026 Awards function here on Friday.

The award was presented by jury member Aparna Popat and R. Doraiswamy, Managing Director and CEO of Life Insurance Corporation of India. It was received on behalf of the State by Bihar's Sports Minister and Commonwealth Games gold medallist shooter Shreyasi Singh, along with Raveendran Sankaran, Director General of the Bihar State Sports Authority (BSSA).

"This award validates Bihar's ongoing efforts to revive its sporting legacy and build a strong sports culture. We dedicate this recognition to every individual working tirelessly for the development of sports in the State," Raveendran said. "Award validates Bihar's rise as an emerging sports powerhouse."

Over the past year, Bihar has moved with great intent, investing in infrastructure, athlete support systems besides hosting major sporting events. In 2025, the State expanded its sporting footprint through a series of ambitious development projects designed to strengthen both elite performance pathways and grassroots participation.

At the centre of this push is the Rajgir Sports Complex, envisioned as one of the State's flagship sporting hubs. The facility includes a multi-purpose indoor hall along with dedicated hockey and cricket stadiums. In Patna, a new hockey turf and the extensive revamp of the Patliputra Sports Complex have further reinforced the capital's role as a sporting nucleus, with upgraded hostels and administrative infrastructure supporting athletes and federations.

Elsewhere, upgrades to the Yamuna Bhagat Football Stadium, the Bhagalpur Indoor Badminton Stadium and the Kalyan Bigha Indoor Shooting Range have expanded the State's competitive venues. New synthetic athletics tracks in Purnia and Chapra, an Olympic-size swimming pool in Bhagalpur and multi-purpose indoor halls in Bhagalpur and Arrah further broaden the infrastructure landscape.

The State's vision extends beyond elite sport. Mini stadiums are being developed across Gram Panchayats, while Khel Bhawans have been established in every district to promote grassroots participation.

Bihar has also announced nine Centres of Excellence across its commissionerates, aimed at identifying and nurturing emerging talent.

Backing these initiatives is a significant financial commitment. In 2025, Bihar allocated ₹600 crore to sports development, signalling a decisive policy push toward building a sustainable sporting ecosystem.

The State's growing stature was also reflected in its ability to host major international and national competitions, including the ISTAF Sepak Takraw World Cup, the Men's Hockey Asia Cup and the Khelo India Youth Games.

Inter's draw with Atalanta gives Milan a sniff at the title

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
MILAN

Inter Milan suffered another wobble in its bid to reclaim the Serie A title after Saturday's 1-1 draw with Atalanta.

Nikola Krstovic earned a point for Atalanta by scoring in the 82nd minute at the San Siro, cancelling out Pio Esposito's angled drive after 26 minutes for the hosts who had looked to be extending their league lead to 10 points.

But Inter coach Cristian Chivu and his players were livid at Krstovic's goal being awarded after what they saw as a push on Denzel Dumfries by Kamaldeen Sulemana, whose saved shot led to the leveller.

The results hands AC Milan the chance to move to within five points of its local rivals.

Milan travels to Rome to take on Lazio on Sunday night and can reignite a title race which looked as good as over a week ago.

Man of the moment: Diaz, left, scores Bayern's equaliser against Leverkusen. AP

Bayern Munich held on for a 1-1 draw at Bayer Leverkusen despite finishing with nine men in an eventful Bundesliga clash on Saturday.

Second-placed Borussia Dortmund's comfortable home win at Augsburg drew it nine points behind Bayern with eight games to play.

Aleix Garcia's goal gave Leverkusen the lead and Bayern striker Nicolas Jackson saw red before half-time.

Luis Diaz levelled things up but picked up a second yellow for diving. Bayern held on as Leverkusen also had two efforts chalked off in stoppage time.

The results: LaLiga: Girona 3 (Rincon 4, Ounahi 77, Echeverri 90+2) bt Athletic Bilbao 0.

Serie A: Inter Milan 1 (Esposito 26) drew with Atalanta 1 (Krstovic 82).

Bundesliga: Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Garcia 6) drew with Bayern Munich 1 (Diaz 69); Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Kalimuendo 53) bt Heidenheim 0; Borussia Dortmund 2 (Adeyemi 13, Reggiani 59) bt Augsburg 0; Hoffenheim 1 (Promel 83) drew with Wolfsburg 1 (Koulierakis 64).

On Friday: LaLiga: Alaves 1 (Rafa Marín 40-og) drew with Villarreal 1 (Pepe 90+8).

Serie A: Torino 4 (Simeone 3, Ilkhan 55, Keita 56-og, Zapata 90+1) bt Parma 1 (Pellegrino 20).

Kerala Blasters snatches a point against East Bengal

ISL

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Muhammad Ajsal scored a dramatic equaliser in second-half stoppage time as Kerala Blasters FC held East Bengal FC to a 1-1 draw at the Salt Lake Stadium, earning its first point of the Indian Super League season in the process.

East Bengal had taken the lead in the 10th minute through a penalty converted by Spanish forward Youssef Ezzejjari.

The host went ahead after Blasters defender Aiban Dohling was penalised for tripping Ezzejjari inside the box when the striker attempted to connect with a probing cross from Edmund Lalrindika.

Ezzejjari made no mistake from the spot.

However, East Bengal's attacking momentum faded after the early goal, and the remainder of the first half turned into a scrappy midfield battle. Blasters did threaten on a few occasions but failed to capitalise on the chances.

Ajsal, centre, celebrates with teammates after heading home the equaliser.

The second half was evenly contested, with both sides creating opportunities, though poor finishing remained a concern. East Bengal's search for a second goal proved unsuccessful, and Blasters struck just when the home defence appeared to have switched off. An unchallenged Ajsal headed home from a corner to rescue a point for the visitor.

The result: East Bengal FC 1 (Youssef Ezzejjari 10-pen) drew with Kerala Blasters FC 1 (Muhammad Ajsal 90+2).

BFC keeps marauding Mohun Bagan at bay

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

A lively encounter between Bengaluru FC and Mohun Bagan Super Giant, witnessed by more than 20,000 open-throated fans at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium, ended in a goalless draw here on Saturday.

The result preserved Bagan's position at the top of the table (13 points) and BFC's in sixth place (8), but on the night, the home side would have been happier, for it kept a clean-sheet against Sergio Lobera's marauding outfit, which averaged nearly four goals a match leading in.

Bagan, in fact, had two gilt-edged chances towards the fag end but fluffed both. Forward Jamie Maclaren headed a superb ball onto the path of Dimitros Petratos only for his fellow Aussie to miss a one-on-one with Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

Moments later, defender Alberto Rodriguez, after escaping his marker, connected cleanly with a corner but hit the ball wide.

Going for it: BFC forward Chhetri, right, and Bagan defender Aldred involved in an aerial duel. K. MURALI KUMAR

All through the contest, BFC played with a low block and the plan was to funnel the ball through inverted right-winger Ryan Williams via fast breaks.

The 32-year-old undoubtedly made his presence felt, but against the mighty Bagan, he had to be a menace.

In the first half, he came close twice but couldn't trouble Vishal Kaith in goal, and in the second period he was denied by an inch-perfect sliding tackle from the excellent Subhasish Bose.

BFC talisman Sunil Chhetri saw two of his hits from inside the area blocked off by Anirudh Thapa. Bagan was the better side overall, stringing together many a flowing passing move. But it paid the price for not being clinical in the final third.

The result:

Bengaluru FC 0 drew with Mohun Bagan Super Giant 0.

INBRIEF

Comeback win for India u-17 women against Myanmar

Substitutes played a decisive role as the Indian under-17 women's football team staged a late comeback to defeat Myanmar 3-2 in the second of two international friendlies in Yangon on Saturday. The host led at the end of the first half through goals from Hnin Wint War Kyaw (12th minute) and Min Htone May Zitar (45th), who scored on either side of Senjam Alva Devi's equaliser in the 33rd. India's substitutes Anushka Kumari (88th) and Joya (90+1) completed the comeback victory.

Rishabh shines for North; South cruises past East

Rishabh Singh (102 n.o., 43b) powered North to a commanding nine-wicket victory over West in the J.K. Bose inter-zone T20 tournament at the Roshanara Cricket Club in New Delhi on Saturday. In another match, South eased past East by eight wickets at the Delhi Police Ground. The event is part of the Golden Jubilee edition of the Sports Journalists' Federation of India's (SJFI) national convention.

The scores: West Zone 133 in 19.2 overs (Sanjeev Samyal 30, Lalith Kalidas 2/26, Shivam Dubey 2/19) lost to North Zone 137/1 in 11.1 overs (Rishabh Singh 102 n.o.).
East Zone 49 in 12.1 overs (M.S. Ramakrishnan 2/13, R. Satya 2/11, Shiva Krishna 4/5) lost to South Zone 50/2 in 4.4 overs.

Four Indians in finals of World Boxing Futures Cup

India's youngsters continued their impressive run at the World Boxing Futures Cup 2026 with Chandrika, Gunjan, Joyshree Devi and Ambekar Meetei advancing to the finals in Bangkok on Saturday. In the women's 51kg semifinal, Chandrika beat Rihab Hamdoune of Morocco by Referee Stopped Contest (RSC) in the second round, sealing her place in the gold-medal bout. Gunjan defeated North Korea's Yu Gyong Kim 5-0 in the 48kg category while Joyshree Devi (54kg) outclassed Mexico's Sofia Ramirez in a RSC in the first round. In men's 50kg, Ambekar Meetei registered a 5-0 unanimous decision victory over Uzbekistan's Abdugani Yorkinjonov. Radhamani Longjam (57kg) lost 2-3 to Ukraine's Yevanhelina Petruk in the semifinal and finished with bronze.

Russell beats back the challenge from the Ferraris to claim the sprint race

Mercedes teammate Antonelli then ramps it up in qualifying to become the youngest to take pole position in Formula One history

CHINESE GP

Agence France-Presse
SHANGHAI

George Russell won a breathless sprint for Mercedes on Saturday at the Chinese Grand Prix, with the first 100km dash in the new era of Formula One witnessing a late safety car and multiple lead changes.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was second and his teammate Lewis Hamilton, who won the sprint in Shanghai 12 months ago, crossed the line third to complete the podium.

Neck and neck: Ferrari's Hamilton, left, and Mercedes' Russell traded the lead several times before the latter triumphed. AFP

Fresh tyres

A safety car on lap 13 of the 19 saw the entire field dive into the pits for fresh tyres, with leader Russell emerging still in front.

Kimi Antonelli in the second Mercedes had been third but served a 10-second penalty in the pit lane for causing an earlier collision which dropped him to seventh place and he eventually finished fifth.

World champion Lando Norris was fourth in his McLaren and his teammate Oscar Piastri sixth.

Liam Lawson in his RB and Oliver Bearman in the Haas were seventh and eighth respectively to round out the points scorers.

The Ferrari of Hamilton earlier had a brilliant launch off the start line, moving from fourth to second and then swapping the lead with Russell twice on the opening lap.

Russell and Hamilton traded places at the front multiple times in the opening five laps, with Leclerc hot on their heels in third.

Russell eventually began to pull away in front leaving the Ferrari pair to squabble for second.

Later, 19-year-old Antonelli took pole position for Sunday's race, becoming the youngest driver to achieve the feat in Formula One history.

Antonelli led a Mercedes front-row lockout along with Russell and erased the record of Sebastian Vettel, who was 21 when he took pole for the Italian Grand Prix in 2008.

"I'm happy with the lap I did," said the 19-year-old Antonelli. "And really happy to be starting on pole for my first time."

Antonelli blasted round in 1m 32.064s, 0.222s ahead of championship leader Russell.

Hamilton and Leclerc will fill the second row followed by the two McLarens of Piastri and Norris.

Starting grid:
1st row: Antonelli (Mercedes), Russell (Mercedes). **2nd row:** Hamilton (Ferrari), Leclerc (Ferrari).
3rd row: Piastri (McLaren), Norris (McLaren). **4th row:** Gasly (Alpine), Verstappen (Red Bull).
5th row: Isack Hadjar (Red Bull), Bearman (Haas). **6th row:** Hulkenberg (Audi), Colapinto (Alpine).
7th row: Ocon (Haas), Lawson (Racing Bulls). **8th row:** Lindblad (Racing Bulls), Bortoleto (Audi).
9th row: Sainz Jr (Williams), Albon (Williams). **10th row:** Alonso (Aston Martin), Bottas (Cadillac). **11th row:** Stroll (Aston Martin), Perez (Cadillac).

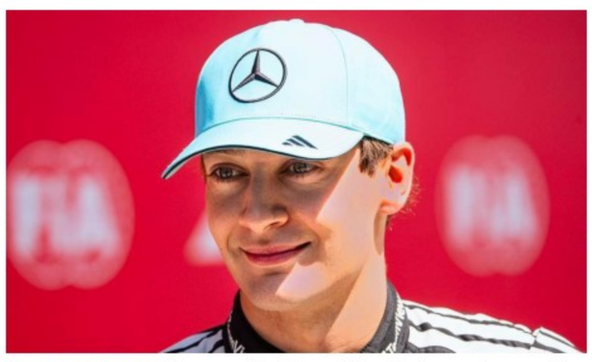
The best drivers will shine through new rules: Villeneuve

S. Dipak Ragav

Former Formula One driver Jacques Villeneuve believes the good drivers will still stand out in the new era of F1.

The 2026 rules have come under criticism for taking out the fun element of driving with emphasis fully on battery management and not the driver's ability to be brave and find the limits of the car.

"You see clever drivers on the track. You see the way they set the car up to benefit from the rules. And that's what's the key. You have a set of rules. How do you make the most of it? And you still see the best at the end of the day winning. And that's what we want to see," said Villeneuve.



Smart operator: Villeneuve feels Russell, *in pic.*, has understood the rules better than Mercedes teammate Antonelli. GETTY IMAGES

When asked about the criticism of the new rules, the 1997 World champion added, "You still have to be the best at what you're given, independently of what the rule sets are. If the rules change, you'll still have the best within those rule sets. And that's what you want to see. Mercedes did an amazing job at figuring it out. And then if you look at the difference in between like (George) Russell and (Kimi) Antonelli, obviously, Russell has understood those rules a lot better as well. And that's paid off."

"The two Ferrari drivers (Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc) seem to have understood them well also. And if you look through the grid, there are some bigger differences between teammates now than there was in the past, because they have to adapt. They have to figure it out sometimes as they drive, which is interesting."

Though Mercedes has the outright fastest car right now, the Canadian felt that other teams will catch up, especially with impending rule tweaks to make the racing better.

"Well, the teams will get closer during the season. That's a given. Mostly there should be a rule change after a few races concerning engines. Then we'll see how much Mercedes has an advantage or not. That will be telling. Mercedes really have a good chassis, obviously, because both drivers are quick."

"Ferrari is close enough to get good points now. That could allow them later in the season, once everything balances out a little bit, to go get some victory. (It's) a little bit tougher for McLaren and Red Bull. Although we've seen Red Bull always recover.

"So Max (Verstappen), if he's not too far, always count on him," said Villenueve.

(Watch the Chinese GP live on *Fancode*)

Sabalenka downs Noskova

Agence France-Presse
INDIAN WELLS

Aryna Sabalenka roared past Linda Noskova on Friday to book an Indian Wells title showdown with Australian Open champion Elena Rybakina.

"I want that match," said Sabalenka, who has been in imperious form. She fired 37 winners with 11 aces, applying relentless pressure from the baseline in a commanding win over Noskova.

The results: Semifinals:
Women: Aryna Sabalenka (Blr) bt Linda Noskova (Cze) 6-3, 6-4; Elena Rybakina (Kaz) bt Elina Svitolina (Ukr) 7-5, 6-4.
Men's doubles: Yuki Bhambri (Ind)/ Andre Goransson (Swe) lost to Arthur Rinderknech (Fra)/ Valentin Vacherot (Mon) 5-7, 7-6(3), [5-10].

The leap: Sarvesh won the high jump gold with an effort of 2.16m. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Sarvesh, Aboobacker and Dev Meena shine at Indian Open jumps

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Maharashtra's Sarvesh Anil (2.16m) won the men's high jump in the fifth Indian Open jumps competition at the Anju Bobby High Performance Centre here on Saturday.

Sarvesh, who was sixth in the 2025 World Athletics Championships, finished short of the qualifying standards for the 2026 Asian Games (2.19m) and 2026 Commonwealth Games (2.22m).

Para athlete Nishad Kumar, who won silver at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics and 2024 Paris Paralympics, claimed fifth spot with a best effort of 2.10m.

In the men's triple jump, 2023 Asian Championships gold medallist Abdulla Aboobacker (16.83m) edged out national record holder Praveen Chithravel (16.78m) to claim victory. Aboobacker and Chithravel met the 2026 Asian Games qualifying mark (16.28m).

The Madhya Pradesh duo of Dev Meena and Kuldeep Kumar cleared 5.25m in the men's pole vault, but it was Dev Meena who was declared the champion on the basis of fewest misses. Dev Meena and Kuldeep attained the qualifying standard for the 2026 Commonwealth Games (5.25m).

The results (winners):
Men: Pole vault: Dev Meena (MP) 5.25m; **Triple jump:** Abdulla Aboobacker (Air Force) 16.83m; **High jump:** Sarvesh Anil (Mah) 2.16m.
Under-20: Triple jump: Dhanush Raj (Ker) 15.08m.
High jump: Basant (Raj) 2.14m.
Under-18: High jump: Devak Bhushan (Ker) 2.03m.
Women: Under-20: Pole vault: Tanu Yadav (UP) 3.55m.
Triple jump: Nithya Shree (Kar) 12.00m.

PSPB and RSPB off to a strong start

TABLE TENNIS

Press Trust of India
INDORE

Traditional powerhouses PSPB and RSPB started their campaign in the 87th UTT senior National table tennis championships with dominant victories, moving closer to the knockout stage here on Saturday.

In the men's section, PSPB set the early pace in Group A with convincing 3-0 wins over Andhra Pradesh and Punjab. Later, RSPB took control of Group B, defeating Rajasthan 3-1 before brushing aside Gujarat 3-0.

West Bengal also made an impressive start in Group C with back-to-back 3-1 wins over Uttarakhand and Odisha, while Telangana topped Group D, beating Chhattisgarh 3-0 and Madhya Pradesh 3-1.

In Group E, Delhi edged out Maharashtra 3-2. Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu advanced smoothly in Group G with 3-0 verdicts. Haryana and Karnataka also opened their campaigns in Group H with victories.

In women's team event, PSPB, RBI, and Maharashtra all registered successive 3-0 victories while Tamil Nadu dominated Group C with wins over Meghalaya and Andhra Pradesh. West Bengal and Delhi also impressed with comfortable victories in their respective groups. Karnataka won 3-2 over Assam.

BCCI to felicitate Binny, Dravid and Mithali at annual awards

CRICKET

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) will celebrate excellence across the Indian cricket landscape at the prestigious 2026 Naman Awards here on Sunday. At this year's ceremony, Roger Binny and Rahul Dravid will be bestowed with the Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award, the BCCI's highest honour recognising outstanding service to Indian cricket.

Terrific trio: Binny, Dravid and Mithali.

Mithali Raj will receive the BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award for women, recognising her extraordinary contribution to the growth and stature of women's cricket in India.

India's Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill will receive the Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer (Men) for the 2024-25 season. This is the second time Gill has been chosen for the honour. Smriti Mandhana will receive the Best International Cricketer (Women) award for the fifth time.

A defining highlight of the award ceremony will be the felicitation of five ICC title-winning Indian teams. The BCCI will honour the senior men's team that won the 2025 Champions Trophy and 2026 T20 World Cup, the senior women's team that won 2025 ODI World Cup, the men's under-19 team that won the 2026 u-19 World Cup, and the women's u-19 team that won the 2025 u-19 World Cup.

LIVE TELECAST

New Zealand vs South Africa: 1st T20I, Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 11.45 a.m.
Formula One: Chinese GP, F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 12.30 p.m.
Bangladesh vs Pakistan, 3rd ODI, FanCode, 1.45 p.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 5 & 7.30 p.m.
Serie A: DAZN, 5, 7.30, 10.30 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Monday)
LaLiga: FanCode, 6.30, 8.45, 11 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Monday)
Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 7.30 & 10 p.m.
Bundesliga: Sony LIV, 8 p.m.; Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 10 p.m. & 12 a.m. (Monday)

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Kishan and Preemal clinch titles

Karnataka's R. Kishan clinched the men's title in the ARC 34th National tenpin bowling championships at Amoeba on Saturday. In the women's division, J. Preemal (Karnataka) captured her maiden national title.

In the men's championship match, top seed Kishan took out Akaash Ashok Kumar 452-429 while in the women's final, Preemal defeated top seed Sabina Athica of Tamil Nadu 332-308.

Special Prizes: Most Promising Player: Anirudhan Sanjeevi and Suchita Kumar.
Most number of scores above 225 (men): R. Kishan (11); **Most number of scores above 200 (women):** Sabeena Athica (4);
Highest block of six games (men): Kishan (1369 pins).
Highest block of six games (women): Sabeena Athica (1122 pins).

Champions: Kishan and Preemal. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Karnataka's Snigdha Kanta defeated Statemate Padmapriya Ramesh Kumar 6-4, 6-4 in the ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors J60 final in Gurugram on Saturday.